

The Rembrandt Presentation Plate given with this Part should be delivered unfolded.

THE QUIVER

CHRISTMAS
NUMBER
1907

1/-

CASELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED
London, Paris, New York, Toronto and Melbourne.

Published Monthly.

All Rights Reserved

FOR 80 YEARS
**CONGREVE'S
ELIXIR**

THE MOST EFFICACIOUS REMEDY IN
CONSUMPTION
COUGHS, COLDS, ASTHMA,
CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, ETC.

See NEW BOOK on CONSUMPTION, etc., by
G. T. CONGREVE. Sixpence post free from
Coombe Lodge, Peckham, London, S.E.

EXTRA PIN MONEY.

Why keep that useless Jewellery

of yours locked up in your box, drawer, or safe, when you might turn it into ready money? Send it to us and we will send you our cash offer by return of post. If offer not accepted, goods immediately returned. We also buy old False Teeth, Silver, Diamonds, Pearls, Emeralds, Platinum, etc., etc.

ALLEN & DAWES, Goldsmiths,
18, London Street, NORWICH.

ESTABLISHED MORE THAN 50 YEARS.

Refined and Jewellers' Directory, Telephone 412.

PLASMON

**Cocoa
for Breakfast**

Best of all breakfast drinks is PLASMON COCOA. It is easy to prepare, and most delicious. Above all, it's food and nourishment for you.

If you like porridge, have PLASMON OATS as well. Just the richest, plumpiest, whitest oats mixed as milled with Plasmon Powder. The enjoyable oatmeal flavour is there unchanged; but your bowl of Plasmon porridge has half a dozen times the food value.



ASK YOUR GROCER
FOR

**PLASMON COCOA
or CHOCOLATE.**

PLASMON OATS.

PLASMON BISCUITS.

Etc., etc., etc.



FREE.

We have told you already how Mellin's Food is standard food for infants. It is an exact substitute for mother's milk. Now we will send you a free sample bottle of Mellin's Food if you will cut out the top half of the print of bottle in this advertisement and forward same to us, mentioning this publication.

Mellin's Food Works, Peckham, S.E.

Mellin's Food



By means of

**Mellin's
Food**

the difficulty which infants generally find in digesting cow's milk alone is entirely overcome.

Either of the following:—

"THE CARE OF INFANTS," a work of 96 pages, dealing with the feeding and rearing of infants from birth,

HINTS ON WEANING," a work of 64 pages, treating of the care of infants during and after weaning, with recipes for simple diets,

will be sent, post free, to those who have charge of young infants on application to **MELLIN'S FOOD WORKS, PECKHAM, LONDON, S.E.**



Flannelette.

If purchasers of this useful material for underwear all the year round would buy the best English make, which can be obtained from all leading Drapers, they would avoid the risks they undoubtedly run with the inferior qualities of Flannelette.

Horrockses' Flannelettes

(made by the manufacturers of the celebrated Longcloths, Twills and Sheetings)
are the best.

"HORROCKSES" stamped on selvedge every 3 yards.

H. 34.

Nature's Way

ought always to be considered by those who are suffering from any form of ill-health. But Nature cannot perform the impossible. She is often impeded in her work by difficulties that can only be removed by scientific treatment. The choice of this treatment is a very serious matter. In cases of trouble connected with the Stomach, Bowels, Liver and Kidneys, you will find that a cure

Is Greatly Assisted

by a course of Beecham's Pills. These Pills contain no harmful substance. They are compounded of pure drugs of vegetable origin. They act quickly, gently, and effectively in all cases of Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Disordered Liver and Kidneys, Constipation, and Impurities of the Blood. There is no sufferer from these and similar ailments who may not treat himself in a perfectly safe, natural, and economic manner, to the full establishment of his health and vigour,

by taking

BEECHAM'S PILLS.

Sold everywhere in boxes, price 1/1 (56 pills) and 2/9 (168 pills).

WRIGHT'S SOAP is of course

WRIGHT'S COAL TAR SOAP,

but the important word is

WRIGHT'S

Why? you ask.

Well, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but the imitations of WRIGHT'S COAL TAR SOAP are so bad as not to flatter the imitators, and they will assuredly disappoint you if not be positively injurious to you.

See the name "WRIGHT'S" is on the wrapper.

4d. per Tablet.

Over One Million Men
to-day are using the

CLEMAK

SAFETY RAZOR



EUREKA!!

A Razor that is
always Keen, needs
no Stopping, and
costs but a fraction
of the price of
other makes.

THE "Clemak" is the safest and cheapest Safety Razor ever produced. Everybody becomes an expert barber with the first shave—it's impossible to cut the face. It will shave any growth of beard with pleasurable ease. **Everything a Razor should do, this Razor does.** It shaves quickly and clean, and leaves the skin soft and smooth.

SAFETY RAZOR, 7 BLADES, 5/-

"Clemak" Blades are ground and tempered by a secret process, and are guaranteed to the limit—they are the keenest, finest tempered, and easiest shavest of all razor blades. They can be STROPPED like the ordinary razor, and will last for years. NEW BLADES 2/6 per packet of six.

We guarantee satisfaction.

Money willingly returned if not approved.

Clemak Razor and 7 Blades in handsome 5/-

Clemak Blades (to fit any safety frame), 2/6 per packet of six.

Clemak Razor and 12 Blades in case de luxe 7/6

CLEMAKS MAKE AN IDEAL XMAS PRESENT.

Send Postal Order and receive your Case Post Free from

CLEMAK RAZOR CO., 17, Billiter St., E.C.

On Sale at all

UP-TO-DATE IRONMONGERS,
CUTLERS, & HAIRDRESSERS.

Clemak Book, "SELF-SHAVING"
(44 Pages), POST FREE.

**NEVER A
DULL BLADE**

**NEW BLADES
FOR OLD**

THE SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND

Founded 1815 for
Mutual Assurance.

Funds
£18,500,000.

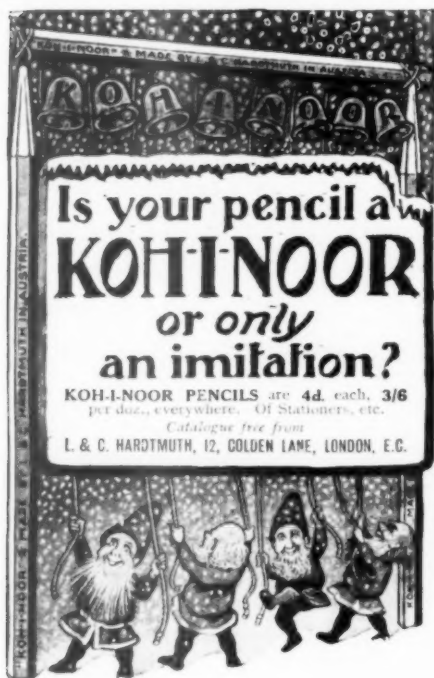
The Largest British Mutual Office

PROSPECTUSES, &c., WILL BE SENT ON APPLICATION

EDINBURGH: 9 ST. ANDREW SQUARE

LONDON: 28 CORNHILL, E.C., & 5 WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

Agencies in all the Principal Towns in the United Kingdom.



Is your pencil a
KOH-I-NOOR
or only
an imitation?

KOH-I-NOOR PENCILS are 4d. each, 3/6
per doz., everywhere. Of Stationers, etc.

Catalogue free from
L. & C. HARDTMUTH, 12, GOLDEN LANE, LONDON, E.C.

CASH'S Hem-Stitch Frilling.

The wide widths are used for trimming
Bed Linen, Pillow Slips, Children's Cots,
&c. The narrow widths for Ladies' and
Children's Underclothing, &c.

Made in widths from $\frac{3}{4}$ in. to 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.



"In an age of
luxury like the
present, it is de-
lightful to the
house-proud
woman to know
that she may in-
dulge in pretty
things without in-
curring criticism
on the score of
extravagance, for
the longevity of
**CASH'S
FRILLING**
is proverbial."
—*Ladies' Field*,
Feb. 24, 1907.

*Illustrated Pattern Sheets, containing Woven Samples
of Material, sent post free on application to*

J. & J. CASH, Ltd., COVENTRY.

Please Mention this Publication.

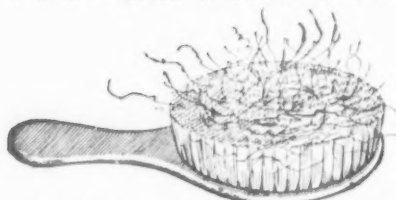
Remarkable Results of "Hair Drill."

READERS' REPORTS HIGHLY SATISFACTORY.

ANOTHER WEEK'S TEST FOR "THE QUIVER" READERS.

RECENTLY readers of "The Quiver" were invited to take part in a week's test of "hair drill." Several thousands did so, with results highly satisfactory to themselves.

As so many have repeatedly written asking if there is to be another week's test, we now have



A most annoying circumstance in the daily toilet of many thousands of men and women.

much pleasure in announcing the completion of the necessary arrangements for another week's free "hair drill."

WHAT THE DRILL WILL PROVE.

1. That your hair can be drilled into fine condition.
2. That your hair need not be too brittle or too limp.
3. That it need not be too highly coloured or colourless.
4. That it need not fall out when brushed or combed.
5. That it certainly need not be scurfy, or greasy, or odorous.

The test was originally arranged for the express purpose of demonstrating that the hair can be "drilled" or trained to grow, as regards both quantity and quality. It was intended to show that, while the hair may—as it does—suffer severely from neglect or improper treatment, it is equally capable of resultful cultivation under certain conditions. That the conditions supplied in the first week's test of "hair drill" were the right ones has now been amply proved, to the satisfaction of thousands.

Hair that was weak and thin is now strong and plentiful.

Hair that was falling now "stands its ground" under the most vigorous brushing and comb-pulling.

Hair that was colourless and faded is now iridescent with shimmering shades of richness.

Hair that was brittle, non-elastic, is now as lissom as strong and healthy hair should be.

Certainly the results of the first week's test should encourage all those of our readers who did not take it up then to now do so without delay.

The arrangements made for the present one week's trial of "hair drill" provide everything necessary at



One of the Methods employed in "Drilling" the Hair. This New System is fully explained in the Free Booklet "Hair Drill," which all readers are invited to apply for at once.

the nominal cost of 3d. in stamps, which small amount merely covers the cost of posting the necessary preparation, namely, Edwards' famous "Harlene for the Hair." The quantity will be found sufficient for one week's "drill" treatment of the hair.

Here it may be pointed out that while "Harlene" is undoubtedly the best dressing for the hair itself, it is in every case of hair weakness, or baldness, recommended that it be well rubbed into the scalp itself.

The scalp must be conditioned before one may expect healthy hair growth, just as the soil in the garden must be prepared if one is to expect fine flowers. The crop is the result of conditions, whether the crop be hair or flowers.

Messrs. Edwards' long experience, during which they have been of service to Royal and other distinguished personages, entitles their recommendations to the utmost respect. Further, the results of the first week's "hair drill," as undertaken by many thousands of readers, only prove how well founded, and how absolutely reliable, is their expert advice on true hair culture.

Readers desirous of having proved to them the possibilities of hair cultivation under proper conditions are invited to fill up and send in the following application form, on receipt of which Messrs. Edwards will immediately despatch their interesting booklet on "hair drill," full directions, and the necessary



A typical case where a short course of "Hair Drill" will prove beneficial.

supply of "Harlene." Further supplies may be had from Chemists and Stores the world over at 1s., 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. per bottle.

In conclusion, it may be added that no greater mistake can be made than resorting to internal remedies, which will only disorganise and ruin the constitution, or by using cheap, worthless remedies which will only aggravate hair unhealthiness.

FORM OF APPLICATION.

(Second Week's Free "Hair Drill" Test.)
To EDWARDS' HARLENE CO., 95.6, High
Holborn, London, W.C.

DEAR SIRS,—Please send me Booklet, directions, and supply of "Harlene" for Second Week's "Hair Drill" Test. I enclose three penny stamps for carriage. If called for, no charge is made.

Name.....

Address.....

(No Stamp)

Price 3d.

KODAKS FOR XMAS

THE HAPPIEST SOLUTION OF THE "PRESENT" QUESTION

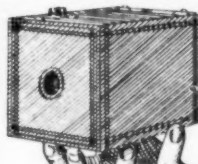
whether the occasion be Christmas, the New Year, a Birthday or a Wedding, is a Kodak. Photography with a Kodak is a pastime which appeals to all and one can be assured that a Kodak will please when another gift may prove unsuitable. Dainty and attractive, Kodaks not only make pictures, they are pictures. In giving a Kodak or a Kodak Outfit the donor gives something useful and instructive. Everything in Kodak Photography is of the utmost simplicity, and can be mastered in half-an-hour. You load in daylight, you develop in daylight, you print in daylight. Before making your choice of gifts consult the Kodak Book, free on application.

KODAK, LTD.,

57-61, Clerkenwell Rd., London, E.C.

46, Bold St., LIVERPOOL, 75-76, Buchanan St., GLASGOW.
18, Brompton Road, S.W., 40, Chancery, E.C. 4, 115, Oxford Street, W., 171-173, Regent Street, W., 40, Strand, London, W.C. and all Dealers.

THE No 1. BROWNIE



5/-

LOADED IN DAYLIGHT.

COMPLETE OUTFITS FROM 13/-



OLD AND FADED PHOTOGRAPHS

Beautifully Copied and Enlarged.

Copies from 3/6 per dozen, Enlargements from 5/6 each, carefully finished in Black and White by Skilled Artists. Price Lists Free.

VISITORS TO LONDON

are invited to call at our Studios and inspect the many beautiful Specimens in Monochrome, Oil and Water Colour, Pastel, etc., on view without involving any obligation to place an order.

Price Lists Post Free on Application

ARTISTIC PHOTOGRAPHIC CO., LIMITED.

63, BAKER STREET, LONDON, W. (NEAR PORTMAN SQUARE).

(Late of 90 and 92, Oxford Street.)

EST. 1880.

TEL. 3727 MAYFAIR.

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

DEAFNESS! BLINDNESS!



New Treatment without operation for all Diseases of the Eye and Ear; Deafness in all its forms; Noses in the Head and Ears; Discharges from the Ears; Deafness from Influenza and Catarrh. Special remedies forwarded. Hundreds of letters in testimony. No "Ear Probes," "Ear-Cornets," or painful instruments. Write for up-to-date Testimonials and Printed Form of Questions to answer. SENT FREE.

Mr. T. ISON (Ison's Eye and Ear Dispensary, Ltd.),
71, Gt. George Street, Leeds. (Estab. 1871.)

NOTE:—Mr. Ison visits the principal towns of Yorkshire, Lancashire, the Midlands, the Counties of Durham, Westmorland, Cumberland, etc. Write for dates of visits or see notices in local papers.

DO YOU VEGETATE?

Are you tired, slow, listless, useless after the evening meal—disgusted with YOURSELF?

You are not ILL, but you are shaping that way. Impurities are accumulating in your system. Rouse yourself; out with them.

The Gem Hot-Air Vapour Bath will help you—will make you and keep you healthy and vigorous.

100 page Book FREE.

THE GEM SUPPLIES CO., LTD. (DEPT. 68),
22, PEARTREE STREET, LONDON, E.C.



BRADFORDS' WASHING, WRINGING AND MANGLING MACHINES

"Simplest and Best"



These celebrated Machines save time money and labour. Do not injure the linen. Will wash all kinds of articles. MONTH'S FREE TRIAL. ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE (60) FREE. LIBERAL CASH TERMS.

THOMAS BRADFORD & Co.,

140 to 142, High Holborn, LONDON.

124, Bold Street, LIVERPOOL.

Victoria Avenue, MANCHESTER.

Crescent Iron Works, SALFORD.



CHRISTMAS

Will
Soon Be Here,

*and you will find me back
at my old quarters.*

GAMAGES

OF HOLBORN
**GRAND XMAS
BAZAAR**
NOW OPEN.

Each of the **60 Departments** in
this huge Store is now filled with **Articles**
suitable for Xmas Presents,
and **All the Latest Novelties in**
TOYS and INDOOR GAMES.

Exhibition of the "Arts and Crafts," Working Models of Under-
ground and Overhead Electric Railway Systems, Clockwork
Railways, &c., brilliantly illuminated by miniature Arc Lamps.
Various other Free Entertainments all day in this veritable

HALL OF DELIGHT.
COME EARLY AND SHOP IN COMFORT.

RESTAURANT OPEN. High Class Luncheons and Afternoon Teas.

If unable to call, write for the Large XMAS CATALOGUE,
500 pages, full of illustrations of articles suitable for Xmas Gifts
for Young or Old, FREE BY POST.

A. W. GAMAGE, Ltd., HOLBORN, LONDON, E.C.

T ALWAYS USE TUCK's



XMAS CARDS
CALENDARS
POST CARDS
BIRTHDAY CARDS
TOY BOOKS
ART NOVELTIES

&c.

They are the MOST
WELCOME, ARTISTIC
and UP-TO-DATE
USED BY ROYALTY.

PRIVATE CHRISTMAS
GREETING CARDS.

Ask to see the
"RAPHAEL HOUSE" and "OUR QUEEN"
specimen books.

Every "TUCK" Card and other publication bears the
name of the firm and our "Easel & Palette" Trade Mark.
DO NOT BE MISLED. NONE GENUINE WITHOUT.

List of 50000 TUCK'S Postcards & Tuck's Postcard Exchange
Register of 1500 Postcard Collectors in every part of the World.
Gratis of all leading dealers, or post free on application to:-



RAPHAEL TUCK & SONS LTD Publishers to Their Majesties the King & Queen
RAPHAEL HOUSE, CITY, LONDON.

PROCTOR'S PINELYPTUS PASTILLES.

For centuries the crying NEED OF THE COUNTRY has been a remedy for the throat and bronchial troubles that are in a great measure due to the variableness of our climate. Even the greatest scientists cannot change the atmosphere, and make our climate bright and dry like those of more favoured countries. But science can do something else. It can take the fragrant essences of the health-giving Pines, and by its wonderful discoveries enable these to be concentrated, and in this way bring to us, living in cold, foggy England, all the rich, balsamic odours of the Pine forests that have such valuable properties and powers to ward off the coughs and colds and other chest ailments that are so prevalent at this time of year. **PINELYPTUS PASTILLES WILL PREVENT MANY A SERIOUS ILLNESS IF USED REGULARLY.** They are easy to take and easy to carry about. And one of the strongest points in their favour is—they NEVER CAUSE DISTURBANCES IN THE STOMACH OR OTHER ORGANS, such as the ordinary cough medicines often do.

How the Trouble Begins.

It is the little things that count. You feel a slight irritation in the throat—perhaps when you go from a warm room into a cold one, or outside into the cold, foggy air. But it is only trifling, and no notice is taken; until after a day or two it increases, and the irritation, which began in the throat, spreads downwards, and penetrates through the delicate passages that lead to the portals of the lungs, the very gates of life. And if a remedy is not sought, and **THE RIGHT REMEDY**, incalculable mischief is done. **PINELYPTUS PASTILLES ARE THE RIGHT REMEDY!**—the most perfect throat and lung healer of the age. We often hear the cry, "Back to the land! Back to Nature's way!" This is Nature's way. It is not the way of drugs that do not cure, but only deaden for a time, and usually make the last state of the sufferer worse than the first. **PINELYPTUS PASTILLES CONTAIN NOTHING INJURIOUS TO THE MOST DELICATE.** One of these small broncho-laryngeal pastilles is equal to a draught of pure pine air, with all the resinous odours that brace and strengthen as well as heal the delicate chest organs. Most of us can call to mind some pleasant holiday spent amongst the pine woods of our own land—or in sunnier Switzerland. How we delighted in the bracing air, and revelled in the rich, scented atmosphere of the feathery pines that circled round the hillsides! And now we may have the same invigorating and healing air in our own homes, at our own firesides, and at a very trifling cost. The concentrated Pine air is a natural food for the respiratory organs, and will brace and strengthen these vital parts.

Take Pinelyptus Pastilles with You.

When coming out of a crowded church or theatre you are always careful to add an extra wrap or coat to your ordinary garments to prevent chills consequent on the sudden change of atmosphere. But have **PINELYPTUS PASTILLES WITH YOU**, and take them at the same time. They will not only protect, but also purify your lungs from the vitiated air you have been breathing, as they are a germicide of the highest possible value. Old-fashioned folks wore respirators to prevent the fogs and impurities from reaching the throat and lungs; but **YOU DON'T NEED A RESPIRATOR IF YOU HAVE PINELYPTUS PASTILLES.** They will save you doctors' bills, and, unlike doctors' medicines, they have no disagreeable taste! This makes them **INVALUABLE IN THE NURSERY.** Children like them, and take them readily—without the struggling and coaxing involved in giving nauseous medicines. It is well to have **A SAFE PREVENTATIVE OF COUGHS AND COLDS ALWAYS AT HAND.** Prevention is better than cure, and a box of **PINELYPTUS PASTILLES** will save many an anxious hour to mothers and nurses. They never do harm under any circumstances. **KEEP THIS CHEAP AND RELIABLE REMEDY ALWAYS IN YOUR HOME!**

A WELL-KNOWN PHYSICIAN, for 40 years one of London's Medical Officers of Health, states:—"PROCTOR'S PINELYPTUS PASTILLES are in every way a boon to singers, speakers, etc., and to sufferers from Asthma, Bronchitis, etc., as they are an antiseptic to the pathological bacteria which lodge and are harboured in the throat. I am a great believer in them."

Mr. C. FENWICK, M.P., writes:—"I duly received the **PINELYPTUS PASTILLES**, for which I sincerely thank you. I am glad to say that I have derived great benefit from their use, and consider them of great service to those who have much public speaking." "You are at liberty to use my testimony in favour of **PINELYPTUS** in any way you may deem prudent."

PROCTOR'S PINELYPTUS PASTILLES are a boon for Asthma, Catarrh, Hoarseness and all Broncho-Laryngeal affections.

Invaluable to Speakers, Singers, and Teachers.

Beware of substitutes. **PROCTOR'S PINELYPTUS PASTILLES** are sold only in boxes bearing registered name and trade-mark, obtainable from leading Chemists and Stores, at 1s. and 2s. 6d.

Proctor's Pinelyptus Depot, 80, Grey Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne.



SS SPLENDID TESTIMONIALS

Science and Common Sense

ALL PROVE that

WHEN THE ROOTS ARE NOT HEALTHY AND STRONG, OR WHEN THEY ARE AFFECTED BY GERMS,

YOUR HAIR WILL NOT—INDEED, CANNOT—GROW

THAT IS WHY NOTHING CAN BE ANY GOOD FOR

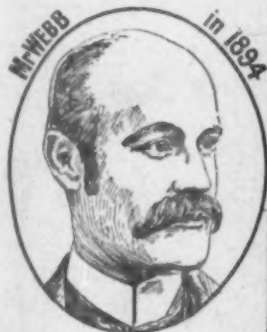
HAIR WHICH IS FALLING OUT OR
PREMATURELY GREY

EXCEPT

Because the harmful germs which injure the Hair can only be gotten at through the Blood, and the only remedy which can reach

them through the Blood is CAPSULOIDS. It is utterly useless to rub stuff on the scalp, because it cannot get down to the germs.

Capsuloids



The Capsuloid Company, Ltd.

125, Spring Bank Road, Hither Green, S.E.

Gentlemen,—These three photographs will illustrate the marvellous effect of Capsuloids in making the hair grow on my head, where I had been bald for upwards of twenty years. The photo taken in 1894 shows that the baldness extended very far back, while the photo taken in 1906 shows the baldness extending quite to the back of my head. I commenced taking Capsuloids in October, 1906, with the idea that mine would be a test case. My hair is not yet very thick, as you can see from the photo, but it is quite two inches long, and new hairs are constantly appearing, so that I am not only no longer bald, but am now assured of a good, thick head of hair.

I certainly have every reason to feel delighted that I gave Capsuloids a trial.

Faithfully yours (Signed), WILLIAM H. WEBB.

[COPYRIGHT.]

**Had always been told there was no cure for Bald Patches,
but CAPSULOIDS cured her.**



To the Capsuloid Co., Ltd.

Dear Sirs,

I feel I would like to add my testimony to the wonderful efficacy of your remedy as a cure for bald patches.

It is nearly six months since I commenced taking Capsuloids, and the result in my case has been truly wonderful. When first writing you told you it was over twelve years since my hair first commenced coming out in patches. During that time I have had to wear my hair short, and have tried almost every external remedy for restoring it, but nothing really benefited me until now. I had really quite despaired of ever getting my head **COMPLETELY COVERED** again. Do what I would there were always some bald spots, and what I had was getting plentifully streaked with grey, but as I saw your remedy advertised, and as it was altogether something **ENTIRELY DIFFERENT** to anything I had tried, I thought it might at least benefit me as regarded my health, if it failed to restore my hair.

I feel I cannot adequately express my gratitude to you. My head is now **COMPLETELY COVERED**, all the bare spots have disappeared and are thickly covered by fine, soft hair. I have really only one or two grey hairs left, and I seldom find any falling out now. I had been told before that there was no cure for these bald patches.

I am enclosing P.O. for three more boxes of Capsuloids, as I shall continue your treatment for some time yet. Thanking you for your prompt fulfillment of every order, and the interest you have shown in my case, believe me, yours very gratefully,

(Mrs.) S. DOWLING.

P.S.—If you think this testimonial of use, you are at perfect liberty to use it.

I tell all my friends about your remedy, and have given away all the free booklets received from you. I feel I owe so much to Capsuloids that I am only too pleased to speak about it.

**Not one Hair remained. Completely Cured by CAPSULOIDS
Read this Testimonial.**

13, Cross Gate, Mexboro', nr. Rotherham.

Dear Sir,—I am very pleased to forward a statement with regard to the splendid effect of Capsuloids. In a previous letter I told you what a bad case mine was, as I had lost every hair off my head, as well as from other parts of my body. I tried various remedies, but without effect.

Seeing so many testimonials from persons who had taken Capsuloids, I commenced doing the same, and after a few weeks noticed new hair growing, though quite white. However, I am glad to tell you that after taking Capsuloids some months I have a splendid head of hair, and only a very few white ones remaining, and these are quickly disappearing. I feel I owe a great deal to Capsuloids.

The several friends to whom I have recommended this remedy speak well of it.

Yours obediently, J. GRANT.



DRY HAIR.

When the hair is very dry and brittle it needs more oil, not from a bottle, but from the little oil glands of the scalp. No other oil can have the same effect. The oil from the little glands, as you can see from the diagram on page 4, passes into the follicle by the side of the hair close to its roots, and from there it oozes out along the outside of the hair.

This gland is nourished by the blood, and when it is affected in any way it can only be cured through the blood, and there is no remedy except Capsuloids which will cure it.

Bald Patch size of a Five Shilling Piece quite cured by Capsuloids.

Hair Tonic and Restorative. Well Worth Cost.



11, Illicott, Mr. J. Giddings, Wilts.

Gentlemen,—I am delighted with Capsuloids. Before using them I had a bald patch quite the size of a five shilling piece. After taking Capsuloids, I am pleased to inform you that my hair has now grown quite thick and glossy, and its natural colour. I have enclosed a photograph, and you are at liberty to make what use you like of same.

Yours respectfully, (Mrs.) F. GIDDINGS.



48, North Street, Worthing.

Dear Sirs,—It is with pleasure I inform you of the improvement in my hair since taking Capsuloids. It was remarkably thin on the top of my head, but with perseverance of the treatment I am now able to send photograph showing the satisfactory results to myself and friends. I shall continue taking Capsuloids occasionally, as undoubtedly they are a Hair Tonic and Restorative, and in my case found it well worth the cost to make the trial. Faithfully yours,

(Miss) L. GOODYEAR.

My Hair came out in handfuls. Hair stopped falling, now thicker than ever.

I was surprised and pleased that there really existed a remedy for Loss of Hair.



102, Tachbrook Street, South Belgravia.

Dear Sirs,—I take much pleasure in writing to tell you of the benefits I have received since taking your Capsuloids. My hair came out in handfuls. I was advised by friends who had tried and benefited by your Capsuloids to do the same. It is now some months since I started taking them, and I am pleased to say that my hair has stopped falling out, and is now much thicker than it ever was. I shall recommend Capsuloids to all my friends.

Yours truly, (Miss) FLORENCE SMITH.



15, Colville Terrace, Notting Hill.

Dear Sir,—I think it would only be fair to say a few words in praise of the preparation of Capsuloids as a Hair Restorer. I found them a decided success. When I had nearly lost all my hair, I tried a few boxes of Capsuloids, and soon found a new growth of hair all over my head. I was surprised and pleased that there really existed a remedy for loss of hair. I do hope that all those suffering from the same complaint will try Capsuloids, for they will find them the true remedy.

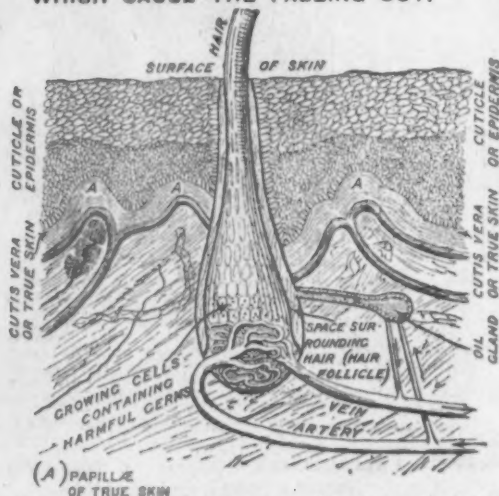
Faithfully yours, (Miss) B. RASHE.

CURING DANDRUFF.

Look at the diagram on page 4, and you can see what a lot of cells there are in the epidermis. When too many of these are formed, the extra ones must fall off, or be rubbed off, and what comes off is called Dandruff. The cause of this is found in the lowest layer of those cells which lie upon and draw their nourishment from the true skin, and therefore that cause can only be reached through the blood, and the

only medicine which will do this is Capsuloids. The improvement must be gradual, but the cure is permanent, and while you are removing the cause of the Dandruff you are also removing the cause of the hair trouble, and securing a luxuriant head of hair.

LOOK AT THIS DIAGRAM, WHICH SHOWS EXACTLY HOW A HAIR (GREATLY MAGNIFIED) APPEARS WHEN IT IS GROWING FROM THE SKIN, AND THE HARMFUL GERMS WHICH CAUSE THE FALLING OUT.



THIS DIAGRAM shows that a hair is attached or fastened to the scalp only at the bottom of its root, and it is at the point at which it is fastened that all the nourishment reaches it. No nourishment can reach it through its sides. All the growing occurs by the multiplying of the hair cells at the very bottom of the root. You can also see that it gets its nourishment altogether from the blood which is carried to the bottom of each hair root in a little artery. The blood after nourishing the hair passes out through a little vein.

Now considering that the hair falls out or turns prematurely grey because germs settle in the growing cells and rapidly multiply, it is clear that they must be killed, and the growing cells of the roots nourished and built up to effect a cure.

By means of this diagram you can realise how thick the skin actually is, and how impossible it would be to rub any preparation through the skin which is made up of those cells of different shapes, and through the other tissues, and on down to the growing cells in the hair roots where the germs are doing their harmful work. There is as much reason in claiming to rub nourishment down through the skin and into the hair roots as there would be in pretending that you satisfied a hungry man by rubbing food upon his skin. It is through the stomach that nature has ordained that hunger shall be satisfied. Hunger is a call for nourishment, and though the feeling of hunger is such that the call seems to originate in the stomach, it is, in reality, hungry tissues all over the body, that is, the muscles, bones, hair, brain, etc., calling for nourishment through the only possible channel ordained by nature to serve them, that is, the stomach.

The food after entering the stomach and being changed by digestion, passes into the blood, and is carried onward to be further changed so as to nourish those hungry tissues. Nature has, therefore, ordained that the hair must be reached from the stomach through the blood which passes onward to the root of each hair, and whether it be nourishment or medicine, there is no other channel by which it is possible to reach the hair roots. Therefore, if you wish to cure weak and falling or prematurely grey hair, or to cure any hair ailment, nature has so arranged that it can only be done through this channel. If it were not that through ignorance in the past, when there was no scientific knowledge of the growth of the hair, many imagined that the application of preparations to the hair was beneficial, it would seem nothing short of childish to suggest that anyone could believe anything so manifestly preposterous, as that hair could be nourished or cured by rubbing stuff on it.

Dose.—Two just before, or during the early part of each meal, three times daily. No doses should be missed until the cure is complete.

From all Chemists and Stores at 2/3 per box, or from
THE CAPSULOID COMPANY Limited, 47, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.
SPECIAL SAMPLE given when this Coupon is enclosed and three boxes are ordered from us; LARGER SAMPLE with six.

Foreign Orders must be accompanied by postage, and remitted in the form of Money Order. Cross all Postal Orders and make payable to The Capsuloid Company Limited.
NOTE.—All goods sent in Plain Sealed Wrapper.

Send for FREE HAIR BOOKLET, which gives full explanations.
Call and have your Hair Examined Free,
Between 10 to 1 and 2 to 5.



SYMINGTON'S *Edinburgh*



A cup or a Gallon of Coffee can be
MADE IN ONE MINUTE

COFFEE ESSENCE

RETAINS THE FLAVOUR OF FRESHLY ROASTED COFFEE



THE HOMES for LITTLE BOYS, Farningham and Swanley, KENT

(INCORPORATED).

were founded in 1864—are pioneers of all English Institutions in their method of dealing individually, in separate Cottage Homes, with Orphan, Destitute and Fatherless Children.

They have been working steadily for the past forty-three years, receiving little lads as soon as they can run alone; placing them under the care of foster-parents; training them in their schools and playing-fields; and finally, after teaching them the rudiments of a useful trade, starting them ready and fit for the battle of life.

Will you interest yourself in the 500 lads now in their care in the two Village Homes on the Kent Hills? There are no reserve or foundation funds of any kind to draw upon—the income has to be collected annually.

Full information will be gladly furnished, and contributions, however small, gratefully acknowledged.

EDMUND S. HANBURY, Esq., Treasurer.

J. DIX LEWIS, Esq., J.P., Vice-Chairman.

PERCY ROBERTS, Secretary.

Offices:—100, TEMPLE CHAMBERS, TEMPLE AVENUE, E.C.




**THE
"DUCHESS"
BOOT
POLISH.**

A shine of magnificent brilliancy—Does not injure the Leather, cake on the boots, or soil the clothes.

Sole Proprietors:
STEPHENSON BROS., LTD. BRADFORD.

The
DUNKLEY
1908

**DUNKLEY'S,
HOUNDSDITCH,
LONDON, E.C.**

Near Liverpool Street
and Bank.
Est. 20 years.

Ltd.



**STOP JOINTS.
WIRED
CUSHION-
TYRED
WHEELS.**

sent by this
Carriage post to your
door.

F.O. or cheque.

£3 : 17 : 6

Blue or Green
**Jamaica Row,
BIRMINGHAM.**

Wolverhampton and
Leicester.

Globe-Wernicke "ELASTIC" BOOKCASES.

Always Complete, but Never Finished.



WE
are the
ORIGINATORS
of the
"UNIT" IDEA.

**Christmas
Presents.**

A large variety of
Novelties on show.



The
"UNIT"
IDEA
at a
GLANCE.

**Cash or
Deferred
Payments.**

Packing Free. Orders of £2 Carriage Paid to any Goods Station
in the British Isles. Send for Catalogue No. 848, post free from:

The Globe-Wernicke Co., LTD.

44, HOLBORN VIADUCT, LONDON, E.C. 1. 82 VICTORIA ST. LON. ON. S.W.

Xmas Gifts

A little thought will prove to you that the "Onoto" is the ideal Xmas gift for father and son, mother and daughter, friends near and far.

A fountain Pen is so useful—and when it is an "Onoto," so lasting and reliable that it cannot fail to awaken appreciation. It runs smoothly and evenly over the paper—never scratches or splatters—never gives trouble—**never leaks**. Moreover you can fill the "Onoto" Pen in five seconds without mess. Just pump from the inkwell—no filler is required. The "Onoto" will write 20,000 words without refilling—the nib is pure gold—iridium pointed and cannot wear out.



2091

ONOTO

Self-filling Safety Fountain Pen

Price 10/6 and upwards, at all Stationers,

Booklet about it free from

T. DE LA RUE & CO., 233 Bunhill Row,
London, E.C.

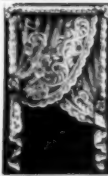
CHIVERS' CARPET SOAP

Is the best carpet cleaner in the world. It removes ink, grease and all dirt from carpets and woollen fabrics. A damp cloth—a little Chivers' Soap—a carpet like new without taking it up. Sample ball sent post free 3d. stamps.

F. CHIVERS & Co. SOAP WORKS BATH



6d
PER BALL
and
retrograde



USEFUL XMAS GIFTS.

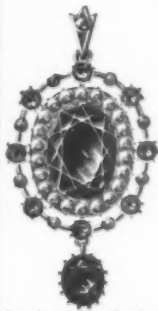
PEACH'S CURTAINS

Everything in Window Drapery. Lace Curtains, French and Swiss Curtains, etc. Blinds, Cretonnes, Tapestries, Serges; also Autumn stocks of Down Quilts, Household Linens, Blankets, Flannellets, etc. Ask for Patterns, Free. **Direct Loom Prices. Direct Saving.** The Catalogue No. 120 shows 400 Illustrations of Ideal Home Decorations. Shall we send it? **HAML PEACH & SONS, The Looms, Nottingham. Estd. 1857.**

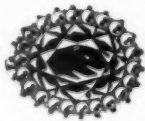
BENSON'S AMETHYST JEWELS

Most Charming Wear.

Very Effective and
Inexpensive.



Pearl and Amethyst
Pendant, £3 10s.



Amethyst and Pearl
Brooch, 32s. 6d

ILLUSTRATED
BOOKS FREE.

No. 1. of Watches, Chains, and Jewellery.
No. 2. of Clocks, "Imperial" Plate, Cutlery, and
Silver Articles.

Amethyst and Pearl
Necklace, £8 18s.



Amethysts and
Diamonds, £9 9s.



Amethysts, Diamond Points, £9 9s.

Obtainable
by
"The Times"
SYSTEM OF
MONTHLY
PAYMENTS
At Cash Prices

62 & 64, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.



EYESIGHT PRESERVED

AITCHISON'S
SPECTACLES

"STRENGTHEN

WEAK EYES."

EYESIGHT
TESTING ROOMS AT

12, CHEAPSIDE,
6, POULTRY,
428, STRAND,
47, FLEET STREET,
281, OXFORD STREET,
46, FENCHURCH STREET,
14, NEWCASTLE STREET,
LONDON.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH:
37, BOND STREET, LEEDS.

Mr. AITCHISON'S "HINTS ON EYESIGHT."

Hint No. 47:

"DISTANCE GLASSES."

Defective distance vision may be caused by Myopia (Short Sight), Hypermetropia (Weak Sight), or Astigmatism, all of which are optical defects, being faults in the formation of the eye. These can be corrected by means of properly-adapted spectacles, but great care is necessary in the selection of the glasses required, and this can only be done by an expert optician, because it is not always the glass with which the individual can see best which is most beneficial to the eyes. In cases of Short Sight, particularly in young people, the glasses when selected haphazard are often too strong, and do irreparable injury. My system of sight-testing secures that the maximum of vision shall be obtained with the most satisfactory results.

My pamphlet, "EYESIGHT PRESERVED," the latest Illustrated Edition of which is now ready, will give most full and interesting details in regard to the eye and its defects, and will be forwarded post free to applicants.

AITCHISON'S SPECTACLES AND EYEGLASSES SKILFULLY
FITTED TO CORRECT DEFECTIVE EYESIGHT.

"EYESIGHT PRESERVED," a Pamphlet by Mr. Aitchison.

New Edition Post Free to "Quiver" Readers.



AITCHISON & Co., LONDON AND LEEDS

Bissell
CYCO-BEARING
CARPET SWEEPERS
are almost absolutely essential in sweeping the sick-room; convenient in sweeping up the crumbs around the dining-room table, or for any general purposes, while nothing picks up the clippings, threads, etc., from the sewing room as quickly and easily.
Based on a genuine **BISSELL**
Prices cut to this.

**Goddard's
Plate
Powder**

For Cleaning Silver, Electro Plate &
Sold everywhere 1/- 2/6 & 4/6.

SHEFFIELD CUTLERY & PLATE GREAT SAVING
IN COST
HOTELS
ETC.
SUPPLIED **FRESH FROM THE FINISHERS' HANDS**

SOLID IMPROVED NICKEL SILVER
WARRANTED WHITE THROUGHOUT

TABLE SPOONS OR FORKS 6/6 PER DOZ.
DESSERT 5/5
TEASPOONS 2/3 PER DOZ.
WARRANTED WHITE THROUGHOUT

Every description of Cutlery and Electro Plate,
MONEY RETURNED IF NOT APPROVED.

ALL GOODS POST FREE. Established 1891.

THE SHEFFIELD GOODS MANUFACTURING SUPPLY CO. SHEFFIELD
ILLUSTRATED FREE CATALOGUE
HAVELOCK WORKS YOUNG STREET

Skin-Tone.

Only a perfect skin-tone can prevent frosted cheeks, red noses, chaps, rough or reddened skin, and the blue, pinched look from wintry weather—only skin-tone can prevent sallow complexions, wrinkles and blemishes. Nothing but Icilma can give "skin-tone." All who wish for perfect complexions in perfect tone must use



Icilma Fluor Cream.

This exquisitely scented cream contains no grease, oil, or fat, but is prepared with Icilma Oxygenised Natural Water, only *really natural* skin-cleanser and tone-giver. A transparent, pearl-white skin, the delicacy of which neither weather, climate, nor age can affect, and clean, refreshing comfort will be the result. Icilma Cream does *not* grow hair, is absolutely harmless, and needs no powder to hide it.

Of Chemists and Stores. Price 1/-, 1/9.

TRY ICILMA. Send 3d. stamps for samples of Cream and of *Icilmine* (solidified Icilma Water—Nature's perfect skin-cleanser), with full particulars and directions to

ICILMA CO., LTD.,

(Dept. 72), 148, Rosebery Avenue, London, E.C.

Vapo-Cresolene

(Established 1879.)

"Cures While You Sleep."

Whooping-Cough, Croup, Bronchitis, Coughs, Influenza, Catarrh.

Confidence can be placed in a remedy which for a quarter of a century has earned unqualified praise. *Restful nights are assured at once.*



Cresolene is a Boon to Asthmatics. ALL CHEMISTS.

Send Postal for Descriptive Booklet.

Cresolene Antiseptic Throat Tablets for the irritated throat, of your chemist or from us. 9d. in stamps.

ALLEN & HANBURY, Ltd., LOMBARD STREET, LONDON.

Valuable alike for Invalids and the Robust.

The Allenburys' DIET

A unique and light diet for Invalids and others.

It is very sustaining and nourishing, is readily taken by those who cannot digest cow's milk, and is especially useful for the aged. It can be made in a minute, the addition of boiling water only being necessary.

In Tins at 1/6 and 3/- of Chemists, &c. A large sample sent for 3 penny stamps.

ALLEN & HANBURY, Ltd., 37, Lombard Street, LONDON.

— The "Allenburys" DIET is a food for Adults and is quite distinct from the well-known "Allenburys" Food for Infants.

SHARP WALKER & CO.,

PIONEERS OF THE FASHIONABLE
PERSONAL GREETING CARDS.



Our Sample Book this Season contains many pleasing novelties, as well as our "Envelope Card," which has already proved such a striking success.

ON RECEIPT OF POSTCARD

we shall be pleased to send you our SAMPLE BOOK (post free) containing a variety of beautiful patterns from which to select.

PLEASE SEND AT ONCE,
as our books are in great demand. All applications are dealt with in strict rotation.

WE MANUFACTURE THESE CARDS

at our own works, and sell direct to the Public at first-cost Factory Prices (shops not supplied), thus effecting you

A SAVING OF 50 PER CENT.



ONLY OBTAINABLE FROM

**SHARP WALKER
& CO.,**

HOLBORN BARS, LONDON.

**By the Flavour**

Cantrell and Cochrane's Belfast Ginger Ale will be appreciated by old and young alike. It is a drink for every hour of the day in every home.

You can tell Cantrell and Cochrane's Ginger Ale from other ginger ale by the flavour. It is as different as can be from the gassy drink that ordinarily goes by the name. The ginger is not too much in evidence—not so strong that it stings the tongue, just strong enough, just sharp enough, and just sweet enough to suit every palate.

CANTRELL & COCHRANE'S

BELFAST GINGER ALE

is absolutely pure, made from pure water and pure ingredients. It is different from other Ginger Ales because it is made from water that time and experience have shown to be the best for making mineral waters. This water is drawn from two celebrated springs in Ireland, Cromac Springs and St. Patrick's Well.

Try it, and see how good it is. Obtainable from all grocers, wine merchants and from all hotels, restaurants, and clubs.


Cantrell & Cochrane, Ltd. (Est. 1852).

Works:

Dublin & Belfast.

Depots:

London, Liverpool, & Glasgow.

Use only
NELSON'S

POLISHES
(Black and Brown)
For BOOTS & SHOES.
Saves BOOTS, MONEY, TIME, & LABOUR.
 Tins, 3d., 6d., & 1s.
 Your bootmaker can supply you. If he does not stock them send his name and address to **D. H. NELSON, Clarke Road, Northampton**, and a **FREE SAMPLE** will be sent to you.
Take no other, there is nothing "just as good" as "N" Polish.

A NATIONAL WORK.
Church of England
WAIFS AND STRAYS
Society.
 Patron: H.M. THE KING.
 Patron of the Children's Union: H.M. QUEEN ALEXANDRA.
 12,600 CHILDREN have been rescued; over 1,650 now being cared for, boarded out and in the 102 Homes, which include 3 Farm and 5 Cripples' Homes.
HELP SPECIALLY NEEDED
 for the EMIGRATION FUND, and for the rebuilding of the CRIPPLES' HOME at Byfleet.
 Savoy Street, W.C. (Rev.) E. de M. RUDOLF, Secretary.

Help Urgently Needed.
North Eastern Hospital
for Children,
HACKNEY ROAD, BETHNAL GREEN.
 Patron—H.M. QUEEN ALEXANDRA.
X 125 BEDS IN USE. X
 T. GLENTON KERR, Secretary.
 Bunkers: Barclays, Lombard Street.

"LET'S TO BILLIARDS."—Shakespeare.
RILEY'S BILLIARD and DINING TABLES
COMBINED.

CASH OR EASY PAYMENTS.
 Cash Prices and Sizes for Solid Mahogany / (Round Legs) - £13 10s. £15. £18 10s. £24 10s.
 Billiard Table and Dining Table are both same size.
RILEY'S MINIATURE BILLIARD TABLES.
 To place in your own Dining Table. Indestructible. Can be drawn against wall. With any size Table. Price from £3 7 6 to £10. Cash or 12 monthly instalments. WRITE for our full detailed Illustrated Catalogue FREE BY POST.
Imperial
E. J. RILEY, Ltd., Billiard Works, Accrington.
 London Showrooms: 147, ALDERSGATE STREET, E.C.

Did you say Iron?

If you did, and are about to adopt the latest, cheapest, most sanitary, and most artistic and decorative of all styles of Furnishing—the employment of iron wherever possible—you will be interested in

CARRON

Iron Goods

which will give you the widest range of choice in everything that is manufactured out of iron, with the assurance of the highest possible quality and workmanship, the most artistic designs, the lowest initial cost, and the greatest durability.

The best way, therefore, when you mean Iron is simply to say "CARRON." Thus you will settle the matter to your complete satisfaction.

All Ironmongers supply Carron Goods.

**Carron Ranges, Carron Crates,
Carron Mantels, Carron Cookers
(for Gas or Steam), Carron Baths,
and Carron Indoor and Outdoor
Furnishings of every kind : : :**

Send for Catalogues of any class of Ironwork you require.

CARRON COMPANY

CARRON, STIRLINGSHIRE

A complete assortment of Carron Manufactures is on view at any of the following Showrooms:-

London (City) 15, Upper Thames Street,
E.C. 4; (West End) 29, Princess Street,
Cavendish Square, W. 1; Liverpool 105,
Red Cross Street; Manchester 11, Broad-
way Street; Bristol 10, Victoria Street;
Newcastle-on-Tyne 11, Pavilion Street;
Glasgow 104, Buchanan Street; Edin-
burgh 107, 109, 111, Corporation Street;
Dublin 11, Grafton Street.

CARRON LINE of First Class Screw Steamers between
London and 8 other ports Four Sailings per week each way.
Saloon and Cabin and ships. Luxurious Coast
Travel at cheap rates. Send for particulars and Tourist
Programme free.



A Brain Builder.

To thoroughly nourish the
brain is to increase its
capacity for work.

Hovis

(Trade Mark)

BREAD

Nourishes the brain,
because it purifies and
enriches the blood.

Hovis is rich in bone
and flesh-forming proper-
ties; it builds up a strong
body and maintains it in
good health.

Hovis is pure, and it is
pleasant to eat.

Sample it now.

OF ALL BAKERS
throughout the Kingdom.

**HOVIS-Bread Flour Co., Ltd.,
Macclesfield.**

BRITISH MADE

Model Makers to the Admiralty, the
Principal Railway Companies, &c.

For inclose or out-of-air use, run back in rods or form studs, straight or circular.
 Brass Boiler fitted with **Water Tubes, Flues, Internal Fire** and **Smoke Boxes**. **Steam Pressure Gauge**, **Glass Water Gauge**,
 Reversing Lever in Cyl. Springs in Driving Wheel. Length over 2 feet. Gauge (H) Price **£5 5s. 6d.** Carriage free.
For complete Specification of above and other Engines see our new Tracts for Catalogue transmitted free.
Special Rails for above complete, 8½ ft. dia. rods, **10s.** Straight ½ in. Lengths of Rails, per set 4s. per doz. if ordered with Engine.
Just Published, New Illustrated Catalogue of **Alloys and other Engines**, **Steam, Clockwork, Electric, Gas, &c.**, **Coches, Waggon,**
Rail, Road, Signals, Stations, Bridges, etc., **Cable-built Steam Ketches, Yachts and Steamboats, Electric Tugboats, Boats, Electric**
Lifting Plants, Locomotive Motors, and the Latest Scientific Novelties and Inventions free to **Givee** Readers on receipt of
 Stamp for postage.

Clyde Model Dockyard and Engine Depot.

MODEL YACHT BUILDERS, ENGINEERS & ELECTRICIANS

(Additional Testing Room, Expiry: mental Workshop, 145 Argyle Street.) ARGYLL ARCADE, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND.

— "THE QUEEN" RECOMMENDS —
JOHN BOND'S "CRYSTAL PALACE"
 WITH OR WITHOUT HEATING, WHICHEVER
 KIND IS PREFERRED. Approved by the Royal Household and
 Awarded a Gold Medal for superiority.
FREE with enlarged 12 size, a LINEN STRETCHER. **MARKING INK**

ASK FOR
BRITANNIA
UNDERWEAR
IT IS
BRITAIN'S BEST
ALL WOOL NEVER SHRINKS RECOMMENDED

YOUR FUTURE IS KNOWN

THE
RESULT
WILL
ASTONISH
YOU.

C. A. Pearson, Esq., W. T. Swan, Esq. and many other prominent public men and women have testified to the accuracy of **Mr. Geo. Wilde's** forecasts, and thousands of others have given corroborative. Sold 1s. and 1d. stamps, together with year and date and time of forth if possible. Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned.—**Geo. WILDE, 6, Central St., Halifax, Yorks.**

Medical Opinion recognises this as the Best Cod-liver Oil produced.

The "Allenburys"
COD-LIVER OIL
"It is a great tonic to get such an oil." — Friedrich

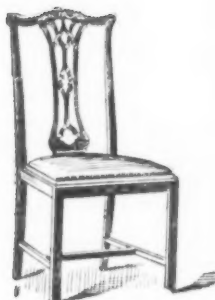
Of Chemists in 1, 2 and 1 Pint Bottles in Cartons bearing the Trade Marks "Allenburys" and a Plough.

ALLEN & HANBURYS Ltd., Lombard St., LONDON.



Elegant Silver-plated on Nickel Silver Cake or Fruit Stand, richly patterned design with Old Sheffield pattern border, 10 in. diameter at top.

14/6 each : original price 21/9.



Beautifully finished Solid Mahogany Carved Chippendale Dining Room Chair, seat upholstered and covered Morocco Leather.

£1 12 6

OETZMANN & CO. LTD.

HAMPSTEAD ROAD, W.

(Continuation North of Tottenham Court Road).

ARE NOW SELLING

THE MAGNIFICENT STOCK OF

Messrs. A. CLERET & CO., Ltd.,

Manufacturers of High-Class Furniture,

40 to 70 per cent. below Actual Cost of Manufacture,

Thus placing this

Beautiful Furniture within reach of all.

Also the Entire Stock of

INEXPENSIVE FURNITURE

OF THE

GREAT EASTERN CABINET MAKING CO.

At Immense Reductions.

Illustrated Catalogue of Sale Prices POST FREE.

"NOTES ON PIANOS."

An Illustrated Booklet containing Two Centuries of the Pianoforte. Gratis and Post Free.



OLD ENGLISH PATTERN

Heavily Silver-plated Spoons, Forks, &c.

	Per doz.	Usual Price.
FIDDLE OR OLD ENGLISH PATTERN.		
Table Forks ...	12/11	21/-
Table Spoons ...	12/11	21/-
Dessert ..	11/6	16/-
Dessert Forks ...	11/6	16/-
Tea Spoons ...	6/6	9/-



Solid Fumigated Oak Bureau and Bookcase combined, with writing flap and interior fitted for stationery, 2ft. 6 in. wide.

£1 3 6

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES.

8,000 Children

are always in Residence

£240

needed every day for FOOD ALONE.



IT'S IT NOTHING TO YOU ALL YE THAT PASS BY.



LITTLE JIM: ONE OF OUR INCURABLES.

Contributions earnestly solicited to pay the daily Food Bill.

Mark Gifts "For Food Alone."

Cheques and Money Orders payable: "Dr. Barnardo's Homes," crossed same way, and addressed to The Honorary Director, Wm. Baker, Esq., M.A., LL.B., at the Head Offices:—

18 to 26, STEPNEY CAUSEWAY, LONDON, E.

"JEWEL" FOUNTAIN PEN, 5/-. THIS IS THE BEST.



FITTED WITH BEST QUALITY 14-CARAT GOLD NIB. IN ALL POINTS TO SUIT ALL WRITERS.
Flows Perfectly! Writes Smoothly! All Users are Pleased! ANY PEN MATCHED.
Sole Makers: JEWEL PEN CO. (Dept. 102), 102, Fenchurch Street, London, E.C.

IRON BUILDINGS and FITTINGS.



CHURCHES, CHAPELS, SCHOOLS,
COTTAGES.



PLANS FREE.

ESTIMATES FREE.



CHURCH, CHAPEL, AND SCHOOL FURNITURE;
SEATS, PULPITS, LECTERNS, &c.
Shipped to any Part of the World.

HARBROW'S IRON BUILDING WORKS,

Adjoining South Bermondsey Station, S.E.

Collars, Ladies, from 4/6 per dozen.
Gents 4/6 to 4/8 per dozen.
Cuffs for Ladies or Gentlemen, from 4/6 per dozen.
Matchless Shirts with 4/6 to 4/8 per dozen.
Sleeves and Collars, 4/6 to 4/8 per dozen.
N.B. OLD SHIRTS AND SHIRTS made as good as new for 12/- the full dozen. By appointment to the King and Exports of India.
ROBINSON & CREAVEN, Ltd., BELFAST, and at 156 to 170, Regent St., London.

NO LANCING OR CUTTING



Required if you have the well-known **BURGESS'S LION OINTMENT**. It has saved many a limb from the knife. Caretakers after being given up by Hospitals. The BURGESS'S LION OINTMENT is a certain cure for ULCERS, TUMORS, ABSCESS, FISTULA, &c. Thousands of Testimonials from all Parts. Sold by all Chemists, 7d., 1/4, &c. per box, or post free for P.O. from Proprietor, L. BURGESS, 50, Gray's Inn Road, London. Advice gratis.

COLEMAN'S WINCARNIS

Restorative & Nerve-Tonic.

FOR NERVOUS WEAKNESS.

Exhaustion, debility, and indolence is a common result of nervous weakness. It means that the most vital organs of the system are exhausted. Nervous debility is often a silent danger signal to the brain. It forces the worker to halt and, if not treated, leads to degeneration. "WINCARNIS" supplies all the requisite elements of regeneration. "WINCARNIS" enriches and increases the volume of the living blood. "WINCARNIS" is greatly appreciated by the sick, the nervous, and the overworked. "WINCARNIS" is especially suitable for the young of all ages. "WINCARNIS" brings back the rich, healthy, and glow of vigorous youth. "WINCARNIS" is very suitable for the treatment of the sick, the nervous, the overworked, and the debilitated. It is a most valuable and strengthening tonic for the nervous system.



SAMPLE BOTTLE GRATIS

SIGN THIS COUPON

To obtain WINCARNIS, free of charge,

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Enclose this coupon and send with three penny stamps to pay cost of carriage. Do not lose this bottle of WINCARNIS.

COLEMAN & CO., Ltd., Wincarnis Works, Norwich.



A 4/6 PACKAGE FREE TO TRY

If You Have PILES

Send your name to-day and get by return post our new 3-fold Treatment which is curing thousands.

To every person who sends us the coupon below, at once we will send **Free to try** our complete new **three-fold absorption cure for Piles, Ulcer, Fissure, Prolapse, Tumors, Constipation**, and all rectal troubles. If you are fully satisfied with the benefit received send us p. 6. If not, we take your word and it costs you nothing; you decide after a thorough trial.

This treatment is curing even cases of old and years standing, as well as all the earlier stages. Yet now and perhaps save yourself great suffering. Our three-fold treatment causes no delay, no cure, it is constitutional as well as local, and we want you to try it at our expense. Our valuable **new Pile Book** (the subject) comes free with the approved treatment, all in plain language. Send the money and the coupon to Dr. Van Voort, 4, 1st Avenue, Chambers, 2nd Floor, Viaduct, London, E.C.



FREE 4/6 COUPON

Entitling any one with Piles

to receive, post free, **Free to Try**, a regular **4/6 Package** of Dr. Van Voort's **3-fold Absorption Treatment**, together with our valuable **New Book** in colors, (the plain wrapper).

Name _____
Address _____
Only one trial package to be sent for.

One good thing
to do to-day for
December 25th.



The great advantages of "ATORA" Shredded Beef Suet apply particularly to Christmas Puddings and Mincemeat. Every mother and housekeeper should test these great advantages to-day and save time, trouble and health.

Shredded "ATORA" The Handy Beef Suet.

No Chopping—No Waste—in tiny particles ready to mix with the pudding, mincemeat or flour. 1 lb. goes as far as 2 lb. raw suet. It takes the place of raw suet, lard and cooking butter, and is more digestible, and does not repeat like many other fats.

"Atora" is extracted from the finest fresh Beef Suet, refined, sterilised, absolutely pure, sweet and wholesome. It keeps fresh for months although no preservatives are used.

Sold in two forms—

Shredded for Puddings and Pastry, and
In Blocks for Frying and Cooking.

Obtainable from all Grocers, Stores, etc., in 1 lb. and ½ lb. boxes. 9d. per lb. 5d. per ½ lb.

Hugon & Co., Ltd., Pendleton, Manchester.

READ, MARK, LEARN
HOW HOW
TO NOT TO
LOOK GROW
YOUNG. OLD.



TWAIN'S

GREY HAIRS are quite in keeping with the role played by the GREAT OLD MEN. But ordinary men desire to retain their youth, keep their faces young, and look two or three years younger. Women desire to retain their youth and beauty. Twain's grey hairs with

LOCKYER'S HAIR RESTORER

In bottles, 1/6. All chemists, or Lockyer's Laboratory, Foreman's Street, LONDON.



To **ASTHMA SUFFERERS.**

Immediate Relief in all cases of Asthma, Bronchitis, Croup, and Whooping Cough is gained by the use of

POTTER'S ASTHMA CURE.

Sold by all Chemists & Herbalists in Tins at 1/- each. Free sample sent on receipt of Postcard to POTTER & CLARKE, Ltd., Artillery Lane, London, E.

Mention this paper.

THE
ONLY SAFE
WAY
TO BUY
JEWELLERY

Is to send to us for a dozen Gold or Silver WATCHES, or RINGS, BROOCHES, etc. for approval to select from. See the goods in your hands before deciding. Catalogue Free. (Dept. 6). **JEWELLERY WAREHOUSE, 66, Corporation St., Birmingham.** (Opposite Great Western Arcade) Established 1884.

Southalls' Towels
Sanitary Absorbent Antiseptic

For Safeguarding Health.

A convenience at less than cost of washing.

Sold by all Drapers, Ladies' Outfitters and Chemists, in silver packets containing one dozen at 1/6, also manufactured under their improved Patents, 1/6, 1/6, 2/6.

A Trial Sample Packet, post free for six stamps, containing six towels in the four standard sizes, from the Lady Manager, 17, Pall Street, Birmingham.

Southalls' Compressed Towels—tiny silver packets, only 2 1/2 in. long. Size A, price 1d. Size B, 1 1/2d. Size C, 2d.

"WINSO" Regd.

The IDEAL FABRIC for NIGHT WEAR for Ladies and Children.



Soft and kindly to the touch, practically unshrinkable and of endless wear, improves with washing, and does not harden or thicken. In white and variety of pretty stripes and colours. From 1/- per yard.

BRODERIE ECOSSAISE.

A beautiful trimming in washing silk Embroidery 6d. per yard.

"WINSO" Night Dress, 12/11.

Ask for sample booklet "What is Winsco?" and "1/- range of patterns, Post Free."

W. SMALL & SON, "Winsco" Specialists,
North Bridge, EDINBURGH.

FREE 4/6 COUPON

ENTITLING ANYONE WITH

RHEUMATISM

To receive prepaid, Free to Try, a regular 4/6 pair of Magic Foot Drafts and valuable new book (in colours) on rheumatism.

Name Address **Only one free pair to one address.**

If you have Rheumatism cut out this free 4/6 coupon and send it to us with your name and address plainly written on the blank lines. Return post will bring you—free to try—a 4/6 pair of the famous Magic Foot Drafts, the great cure for Rheumatism. They are curing very bad cases of every kind of Rheumatism, both chronic and acute, no matter how severe. They are curing cases of 30 and 40 years' suffering, after doctors and baths and medicines had failed. Send us the coupon to-day. When the Drafts come, try them. If you are satisfied with the benefit received—then you can send us 4/6. If not, we simply take your word, and the Drafts cost you absolutely nothing. Aren't they worth trying on that basis? Our faith is strong that they will cure you, so cut out and send the above coupon to-day to Magic Foot Draft Co., 1252, Victoria Chambers, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C. Send no money—no stamps—just the coupon.

**DIABOLO, the New Craze Game, Given Away**

5/- Giant Cookery Book, with Illustrations and 1,000 Recipes, also being GIVEN AWAY.

RAPHAEL TUCK'S CHARMING XMAS CARDS

2/6 PARCEL FOR 1/3 HALF PRICE. 2/6 PARCEL FOR 1/3

This Handsome Half-Crown Parcel we ask you to please recommend. Envelopes included. It contains 25 Expert Folding Designs by Tuck. SEND AT ONCE. Simply Lovely.

40 for 1/- CLUSTER DE LUXE. 20 for 6d.

ALL BY TUCK. With Envelopes. AS A SAMPLE. Post Free, 2 stamps extra.

100 for 1/3. ALL TUCK'S CARDS.

SERVETTES, XMAS TABLE PARCEL 12 STAMPS.

Parfumerie par Excellence. Special Xmas Parcel 4 stamps.

BIG BOX OF TEN TOYS FOR A SHILLING.

TBL, King's Premises, Savoy Corner, Strand, London.

Which?**YOU CAN'T HAVE BOTH.**

Will you have a
NASTY HEADACHE

OR A
**DR. MACKENZIE'S
SMELLING**

**BOTTLE?**

Which cures HEADACHE, COLD IN THE HEAD,
CATARRH, DIZZINESS, and FAINTNESS.

OF ALL CHEMISTS, price ONE SHILLING, or
direct, 14 stamps in the United Kingdom.

TUNBRIDGE & WRIGHT, READING.

BIRKBECK BANK.

ESTABLISHED 1891.
SOUTHAMPTON BUILDINGS, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

2 PER CENT. INTEREST

allowed on Deposit Accounts.

2 PER CENT. INTEREST

on Drawing Accounts with Cheque Book.

All general Banking Business transacted.

ALMANACK, with full particulars, **POST FREE**

C. E. RAVENSCROFT, Secy.

THE FAIRYLAND OF LIVING THINGS.

Written by RICHARD KEARTON. Photographs by CHERRY KEARTON. 3s. 6d.

* A charming book by those two eminent naturalists, to whom we owe so great a debt for introducing us to the charms of wild free Nature. The *Evening Standard* says: "No praise is necessary nowadays to the work of Messrs. RICHARD and CHERRY KEARTON. Their object here has been to give children a peep into the wonderful fairyland of the living things of the country-side. The Photographs are, of course, delightful."

ESTABLISHED 1865.

THE SURGICAL AID SOCIETY.

Office—**SALISBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.**

Telephone No. 1 "12262 CENTRAL."

Patron: HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

President: THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ABERDEEN, P.C., G.C.M.G.

This SOCIETY supplies Spinal Supports, Leg Instruments, Trusses, Elastic Stockings, Artificial Limbs, &c., and every other description of mechanical support to the poor, without limit as to locality or disease. Water Beds and Invalid Chairs and Couches are lent to the afflicted upon the recommendation of Subscribers.

36,474 Appliances given year ending September 30, 1906.

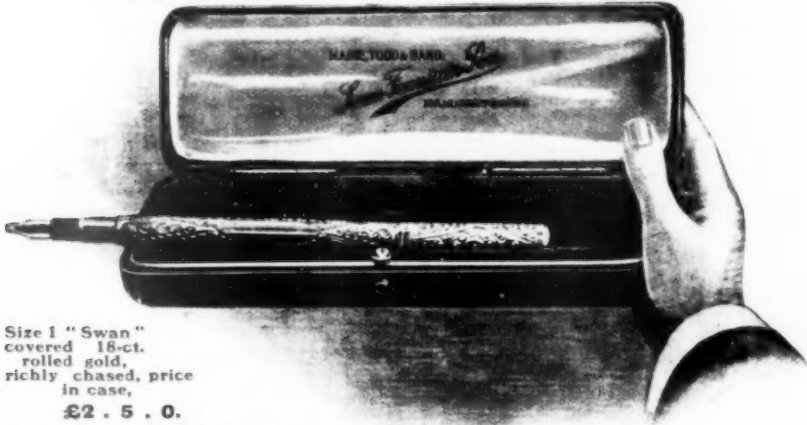
Annual Subscription of 10s. 6d., or Life Subscription of 5 guineas, entitles to Two Recommendations per annum, the number of letters increasing in proportion to amount of contribution.

SUBSCRIPTIONS and DONATIONS are earnestly solicited, and will be thankfully received by the Bankers, Messrs. Barclay & Co., Ltd., Lombard Street, or by the Secretary at the Office of the Society.

RICHARD C. TRESIDDER, Secretary.

AN IDEAL XMAS GIFT for LADY or GENTLEMAN.

Sure to meet with unbounded appreciation.



Size 1 "Swan"
covered 18-ct.
rolled gold,
richly chased, price
in case,
£2 . 5 . 0.

For other "Swans" see Cat-
alogue, post free.

SOLD BY ALL
STATIONERS &
JEWELLERS.

MABIE, TODD & CO., 79 & 80, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

93, Chancery Lane, E.C. 4; 95a, Regent St., W., London; 3, Exchange St., Manchester; 10, Rue Neuve,
Brussels; Brentano's, 37, Ave. de l'Opéra, Paris; and at New York, Chicago, and Sydney.

COLD

days and long even-
ings are with us
once more. The
youngsters can no
longer play out of
doors, and the
majority of their
indoor games soon
pall. The great
question is: "What
will keep them busy
and quiet?"

HAVE YOU
ever tried
a box of

**HARBUTT'S
PLASTICINE**

MODELLING PASTE?

Each fitted complete with Plasticine in 5 Beautiful Colours, Tools,
and Directions, &c. The Best Box of all is the

"BUILDER BOX."

It is an **IDEAL GIFT**, and contains in addition Brick Maker, Trowel, Roller, Tile Cutters,
Boards, and Illustrated Instructions. **No Dirt, Mess, Trouble, or Preparation.**

Price 5/- (post free, 5/6) from **Wm. HARBUTT, A.R.C.A., 27, Bathampton, Bath.**



CHARITABLE APPEALS.

The Editor of "The Quiver" will receive and acknowledge any Donations or Subscriptions for the under-mentioned Charities that are forwarded to him, addressed *La Bells Savings, London, E.C.*

A
Home
and
Education
for
500
Fatherless
Children.

The Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage

Founded 1758.
Haverstock Hill, London, N.W.

Patrons:
H.M. THE KING.
H.M. QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

President:
H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.

Treasurer:
Sir Horace Brooks Marshall,
M.A., LL.D., J.P.

SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

An Annual Subscription of One Guinea entitles to two votes at each Half-Yearly Election.

Information will be gladly given by the Secretary, to whom Contributions should be sent.

Barkers: The London Joint Stock Bank,
Princes Street, E.C.

ALEXANDER GRANT, Secretary.
Offices
73, CHEAPSIDE, LONDON, E.C.

"BEGIN WITH THE CHILDREN,"
LORD SHAFTESBURY used to say—and he was right!
For over sixty years this has been the work of the

Ragged School Union And Shaftesbury Society,

of which he was the practical founder.
The Society is a DISTINCTLY CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION, an ally of the Church and an embodiment of

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

and it now EARNESTLY PLEADS for YOUR LIBERAL HELP, that the leading aid of CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY, as well as the equally necessary "pennance," may never be lacking for those in DISTRESS and MISERY.

The Society has affiliated with it 120 LOCAL MISSION CENTRES in the congested districts of London. It thus reaches AT LEAST 100,000 SOULS weekly, through its manifold agencies, sustained by over 6,000 VOLUNTARY WORKERS.

It has a sensible scheme for

**HELPING THE BOOTLESS,
CLOTHING THE RAGGED,
FEEDING THE HUNGRY,
RAISING THE DOWNCAST, and
BUILDING UP CHARACTER.**

It has a Register of over SEVEN THOUSAND CRIPPLED CHILDREN in their sad homes, poor AFFLICTED LITTLE ONES, who need every EFFORT—the SPIRITUAL INTEREST being paramount.

It sends away over 2,000 pale-faced Children and Adults to its Holiday Homes at the Seaside each year, in addition to giving over 10,000 Children a Day's Fresh Air.

FUNDS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED

All CONTRIBUTIONS should be sent to the Director,
SIR JOHN KIRK, R.S.U. and Shaftesbury Society,
32, John St., Theobald's Road, LONDON, W.C.

LONDON FEMALE PREVENTIVE & REFORMATORY INSTITUTION.

A Mission of Mercy which appeals to the sympathy and help of every Christian man and woman.

Founded 1847.
£15 required daily.
Depend on Voluntary Contributions.
FRIENDLESS AND FALLEN.
Supports 100 Homeless and an Evening Night Refuge, and maintains 150 inmates.

Over 45,000 young women and girls have been assisted.
The Committee very earnestly appeal for help.
Secretaries: WILLIAM J. TAYLOR, 1, Lambeth Lane, S.W.
BARKERS: LONDON & WESTMINSTER BANK, 48, HANOVER SQUARE, W.

DISABLED MISSIONARIES', WIDOWS', and ORPHANS' FUND

OF THE
LONDON CITY MISSION.

This Fund was formed to give support to aged and infirm Missionaries, who after a life-long service are compelled to retire from their labours. 62 of these receive yearly grants of £42 57 widows whose husbands died in the work, and 11 orphans, receive grants of from £10 to £20 yearly. In all about 200 persons are recipients of this Fund. The Committee require nearly £5,000 a year to meet the demands of this Fund. They therefore earnestly ask you to cast generously into this part of our Lord's Treasury.

Sec. MR. JAMES DUNN,
3, BRIDWELL PLACE, LONDON, E.C.

THE CHURCH ARMY. FRESH AIR HOMES for tired and ailing mothers and children from the slums.

AT 120 LABOUR HOMES, Farm Colonies, and other Agencies, Criminals, Tramps, and Wastrels are reclaimed and help given to respectable men out of work. Relief by work for the unemployed. 40,000 helped in a year.

EMIGRATION. Deserving, distressed single men and families sent to Canada.

69 MISSION VANS continually itinerating throughout the country.

Missions in PRISONS, WORKHOUSES, and SLUMS. Parochial Evangelists and Mission-Sisters in all parts of the United Kingdom.

Funds: 100,000, and Order has been sent for 100,000 more. Agents required: Churches, School Houses, Friendly Societies, etc. Hon. Genl Sec., Headquarters, Marble Arch, W.

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS,

105, JERMYN STREET, LONDON, S.W.

President: HER MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.
President: HER MAJESTY QUEEN ALEXANDRA.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF WALES.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF BATH.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF CAMBRIDGE.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF GLOUCESTER.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF KENT.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF LANCASHIRE.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF NORTHAMPTON.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF OXFORD.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF SURREY.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF WESTMORLAND.
President: HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF YORK.

The work of this Society, which was founded in 1824, and has Branches in most of the large towns of England and Wales, has a strong claim for the support of the charitable lovers of the animal creation. It is supported only by Voluntary Contributions, and the Council need every assistance to enable them to continue their work—which is both educational and punitive.

Supported only by Voluntary Contributions.

CHARITABLE APPEALS.

The Editor of "The Quiver" will receive and acknowledge any Donations or Subscriptions for the under-mentioned Charities that are forwarded to him, addressed La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.



The CITY MISSIONARY goes DAILY urging the poor and artisan classes to yield themselves to the Friend of Sinners—and the **WORK IS NOT FRUITLESS**, but attended with rich blessing.

In all 417 Missionaries employed.
FUNDS MUCH NEEDED.

Treasurer: F. A. BEVAN, Esq.
Secretaries: Rev. T. S. HUTCHINSON, M.A.
Rev. MARTIN ANSTLEY, M.A., B.D.
Bankers: BARCLAY & CO., LTD.

LONDON CITY MISSION,
3, BRIDEWELL PLACE, LONDON, E.C.

"THERE
IS
SORROW
ON THE
SEA,"



Over Half a Million persons relieved since its foundation in 1830.

BUT—

1. The Shipwrecked are instantly cared for on the spot and sent home;
2. The Widow and Orphan are immediately sought out and succoured;
3. The Mariner and Fisherman are encouraged to exercise thrift by becoming beneficiary members of

The SHIPWRECKED

Fishermen and **MARINERS'**

Royal Benevolent **SOCIETY.**

Patron: HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

President: THE RT. HON. THE EARL CAHAGAN, K.G.
Vice-President: VICE ADMIRAL W. E. S. MANS.

Contributions appealed for.

Bankers: WILLIAMS DEVLIN & BANG, Ltd.,
Charity Commission Branch.

Secretary: GERALD E. MAYHEW, Esq.

26, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall East, S.W.

THE QUIVER says:—

"This is a wonderful hospital."

See September Number, page 1006.

THE ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL

FOR CHILDREN WITH HIP DISEASE

(under the Special Patronage of
H.M. THE QUEEN).

ONE HUNDRED COTS always full.

Each one occupied by a

HELPLESS,

SUFFERING,

CRIPPLED CHILD.

Will each reader of "The Quiver" kindly assist the little ones for whom we plead?

**£400 urgently needed at once
to meet pressing bills.**

Contributions, however small, crossed "Messrs. Hoare & Co." will be gratefully acknowledged if sent to the Secretary at

THE ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL,
Queen Square, Bloomsbury, London.

Thousands of Emigrants

Have left England for Canada every week for months past. They are mostly poor; they are scattered far and wide over the vast plains. Without help at first they can have **no clergyman, no church, no opportunity for worship**, and are in danger of drifting away from all religion.

.. THE ..

Colonial and Continental Church Society

9, SERJEANT'S INN, FLEET ST., LONDON, E.C.
appeal for a Special Fund of **£42,000** to establish Missions amongst the settlers of the new North West.

ARCHDEACON LLOYD

three other clergymen, and 32 laymen have been sent out this year, and **£13,800** subscribed.

£80 will pay passage and outfit. **£70** a year for three years will put a man in the field. **£70** a year for seven years will establish a new self-supporting district. **£50** will build a first little wooden church.

Secretary:

The Rev. J. D. MULLINS,
9, Serjeant's Inn, Fleet St., London, E.C.

Write to HODDER & STOUGHTON

for their new detailed list
of Helpful Books on the
Bible and Christian Life and
Character, which includes
works by

Dr. G. CAMPBELL MORGAN

Dr. J. R. MILLER

S. D. GORDON

and other famous present-day teachers.

A postcard, mentioning "The Quiver"
and giving the name and address of
sender, and addressed as below, will
be sufficient.

HODDER & STOUGHTON, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.

ALSTON RIVERS' SELECT LIST OF GIFT BOOKS.

Sarah the Valiant.

BY THEODOREA WILSON WILSON, AUTHOR
OF "THE MAGG JUBBES," ETC. CROWN
8VO. EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS. A DELIGHTFUL
BOOK FOR A GIRL. THREE
SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

The Truant Five.

ANOTHER GIRL'S BOOK BY RAYMOND
JACOBENS, AUTHOR OF "THE NEW
FUEL," ETC. ILLUSTRATED. THREE
SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

One Day a Gipsy;

OR, THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WANTED TO
SEE PETER PAN. A CHILDREN'S PLAY
IN FOUR ACTS BY GEORGETTE AGNEW;
SET TO MUSIC BY PHILIP LESLIE AGNEW.
A DISTINCTLY SUPERIOR CHILD'S GIFT-
BOOK. FCAP 4TO. THREE SHILLINGS
AND SIXPENCE.

The Zoo: A Scamper.

A NEW AND CHEAP EDITION OF THIS
POPULAR BOOK. BY WALTER EMANUEL,
WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN
HASSALL. FCAP 4TO. ONE SHILLING NET.

OTHER BOOKS SUITABLE AS GIFTS TO A
LADY OR GENTLEMAN ARE "MRS. MEYER'S
PUPIL," WITH COLOURED FRONTISPIECE,
AND "THE BOOK OF LIVING POETS," BY
WALTER DEERDING.

LONDON: ALSTON RIVERS, LIMITED.

A SELECTION FROM

JAMES CLARKE & CO.'S Autumn List.

Vida; or, The Iron Lord of Kirkcubright. By S. R. CROCKETT, Author of "Kit Kennedy," &c. Large crown 8vo, cloth boards, gilt top. With 4 Illustrations on Art Paper. 7s. 6d.

Our City of God. By I. BIRCHLEY, B.A., Author of "Ourselves and the Universe," "Studies of the Soul," &c. Large crown 8vo, cloth boards, gilt top. 7s. 6d.

Faith and Verification. With other Studies in Christian Thought and Life. By Principal J. GRIFITH-JONES, Author of "The Ascent Through Christ," &c. Large crown 8vo, cloth boards, gilt top. With Photogravure Portrait. 5s.

Thoughts for Life's Journey. By GEORGE MATHISON, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S., Author of "Leaves for Quiet Hours," &c. 288 pages, cloth boards, gilt edges, with head band and markers. 3s. 6d. net; leather, 5s. net.

A Working Woman's Life. The Autobiography of Marianne Farnham. Large crown 8vo, cloth boards, gilt top. With Photogravure Portrait and 5 Illustrations on Art Paper. 3s. 6d. net.

The Gospel of Grace. By J. D. JONES, M.A., F.D., Author of "Christ's Pathway to the Cross," &c. Large crown 8vo, cloth boards, gilt top. 3s. 6d. net.

Practical Lay Preaching and Speaking to Men. By H. JEFFES, Editor of "The Christian World Pulpit." With outlines of sermons and addresses by leading Preachers and Speakers. Crown 8vo, 250 pages, cloth boards. 2s. 6d. net.

The Rosebud Annual for 1908. 4 Coloured Plates and one-half of the book in colour. Coloured paper boards, varnished, 1s. 3d. cloth boards, with design in gold and colours, 4s.

Animal Gambols. Humorous Pictures of Animals drawn by LOUIS WAIN, HARRY E. NELSON, J. A. SHEPHERD, and others. Coloured Frontispiece. Crown 4to, coloured paper boards, varnished, 1s.

Fireside Fairy Tales. Full of delightful Stories and Pictures of Fairies and Pixies. Coloured Frontispiece. Crown 4to, coloured paper boards, varnished, 1s.

LONDON: JAMES CLARKE & CO.,
13 & 14, FLEET STREET; and of all Booksellers.

Christmas Booklets

*A Beautiful and acceptable Substitute
for the Conventional Christmas Card.*

Literary Gems

In cloth covers, 6d. net.

Enoch Arden. TENNYSON.

The Deserted Village. GOLDSMITH.

Rubāiyat. OMAR KHAYYAM.

Elegy in a Country Churchyard. GRAY.

Christmas in the Olden Time. SCOTT.

Ode on Immortality. WORDSWORTH.

Spiritual Gems

Books of 128 pages each, by well-known Divines on
topics of universal interest. In paper covers, 6d. net;
cloth, 1s. net.

My Object in Life. DEAN FABRER.

My Bible. RT. REV. BISHOP OF EDINB.

My Aspirations. REV. G. MATHESON, D.D.

Artistic Gems

Each volume containing reproductions of 60 of the
principal pictures in the collection, with brief notes.
In paper covers, 6d. net; cloth back, 1s. net.

The National Gallery.

The Tate Gallery.

The Louvre.

The Luxembourg.

CASSILL AND CO., LTD., LONDON.

MURRAY'S ... FLUID MAGNESIA



For Indigestion, Headache, and all Liver Complaints

Prepared only by SIR JAMES MURRAY & SONS,
FENDLE ST., DUBLIN. OF ALL Chemists & Stores.

A PERFECT APERIENT MEDICINE.

TOM SMITH'S



CRACKERS

The Tonic Obesity Cure

OF CHEMISTS &c

PRICE 2/6 & 4/6

Antipon

REGD TRADE MARK

Stout readers who have yet failed to find a really permanent cure for obesity may take heart. There is no need to despair when they have still to try Antipon, recognised by the most competent authorities as the standard remedy for the permanent cure of corpulence. It never disappoints anyone, however many disappointments they may have had. The world is beginning to learn that the old-time methods of reducing weight by semi-starvation, drugging, and sweating were the last relics of empiricism, and simply reduced the bulk by grievously weakening the body. Antipon reverses the process, inasmuch as it strengthens the body by extra nourishment whilst diminishing the weight. It is a powerful fat absorbent, and at the same time a splendid tonic, promoting a keen appetite and assisting digestion. Hence, while the superfluous fat is being expelled the good food is doing its reinvigorating work. Muscular development replaces fat development. There are no repellent dietary rules to bother about—no sweating, no cathartics. A day and a night will suffice to prove the remarkable efficacy of Antipon, a minimum reduction of 8 oz. to a maximum of over 3 lb. being the first result. Then there is a steady reduction day by day. When normal conditions of weight and symmetry are restored the doses cease to be necessary, the tendency "to put on flesh" having been destroyed during the process of fat absorption. Surely this is the most scientific and rational treatment ever discovered. Antipon contains nothing but harmless vegetable ingredients in a liquid form, is neither laxative nor constipating, and has no unpleasant reactionary effects.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists, Stores, etc.; or, should any difficulty arise, may be had (on sending amount), carriage paid, privately packed, direct from the Sole Manufacturers, the Antipon Company, 11, Olmar Street, London, S.E.

Marvellously Successful in the Severest Cases.

In our Colonial readers, Antipon may always be obtained by ordering through a local Chemist or Store.

OAKEY'S WELLINGTON KNIFE POLISH,

Prepared Expressly for Oakey's Knives, Carls, Roll Leather Boards, and all Patent Knife-Cleaning Machines.
Sold in Cansisters, 5d., 6d., 1s., 2s., 5d., and 4s. each.

OAKEY'S Non-Mercurial SILVERSMITH'S SOAP,

For Cleaning and Polishing Silver, Electro-Plate, Plate Glass, Marble, &c. Tablets, 6d. each.

OAKEY'S WELLINGTON KNIFE BOARDS,

The quickest and cheapest articles for Cleaning Cutlery when dressed with the Wellington Knife Polish.

OAKEY'S WELLINGTON BLACK LEAD,

The best and cheapest article for polishing Stoves, Grates, and Iron Work, without waste, dirt, or dust. In 1d., 2d., and 4d. Blocks; and 1s. Boxes.

JOHN OAKEY & SONS, LIMITED,

Manufacturers of Glass Paper, Emery and Glass Cloth, Emery, Black Lead, Pumice, Putty Powder, Rouge, Plate Powder, Furniture Polish, Brass Polish, &c. &c.

WELLINGTON EMERY & BLACK LEAD MILLS, Westminster Bridge Road, London. S.E.

OSBORNE, BAUER & CHEESEMAN'S
WORLD-RENOUNDED
"Glycerine & Honey Jelly"

PATENTED TRADE MARK
"Glymiel" Jelly.

FOR CHAPS, ROUGHNESS OF SKIN, ETC.
Occasioned by Cold or Heat. It Softens and Improves the Hands, Face, and Skin generally.
THIRTY YEARS INCREASING DEMAND.
Sold by all Chemists and Grocers in Metallic Tubes. 6d. and 1s., or sent postage free in strong tin boxes. Free Post.
OSBORNE, BAUER & CHEESEMAN,
Representatives for London, 19, Golden Square, W.
19, GOLDEN SQUARE, RECENT ST., LONDON, W.

LADIES' and CHILDREN'S HAIR

can be preserved, beautified, and enriched for years by using

ROWLANDS' MACASSAR OIL,

which prevents baldness and keeps the hair soft and glossy. It restores the hair to its natural Golden Colour by removing dandruff. Price, 3/6, 7/6, 10/6. Sold by Messrs. Chemists and Grocers.
A. ROWLAND & SONS, Hatton Garden, London.

A welcome Winter Pudding—

A Corn Flour Custard Pudding served hot.

It is one of the simple homely dishes that go well with any meal.

It is good served alone, and also delicious with stewed fruit.

It is quickly made, costs little, and whether baked or boiled is equally enjoyed by young and old. The recipe, with others, is in every packet of

Brown & Polson's "Patent" Corn Flour.

The Corn Flour for wholesome puddings. Make a point of getting it.



SPECTACLES or EYEGLASSES fitted with "Dunscombe" INVISIBLE BIFOCAL LENSES

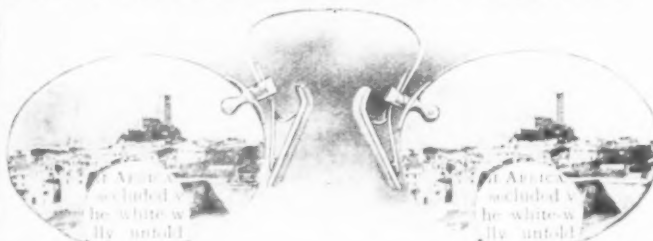
(for near and distant objects).

MAXIMUM OF ELEGANCE, UTILITY, AND COMFORT.

Write for Full Particulars from
M. W. DUNSCOMBE, Ltd.,
Sight Specialists,
BRISTOL.

Or from your Local Optician.

ACCEPT NO IMITATION.



Face and Goggles.

The Quiver, December, 1907.

CONTENTS.

Frontispiece: Sunshine and Snow.—From the Picture by E. DOUGLAS.

	PAGE
Stories of Queen Alexandra David Williamson	3
King Winter's Snow Pictures	13
The Making of a Man. A Complete Story Annie S. Swan	17
Illustrated by GRANVILLE MANTON.	
The Meaning and Message of Christmas Rev. Dr. J. R. Miller	24
The Christmas Baby. A Complete Story Nora Tynan O'Mahony	27
Illustrated by C. H. TAPPEL.	
Christmas at Bethlehem. Illustrated by the Author F. de Haenen	33
One Christmas Afternoon. A Complete Story S. Macnaughtan	41
Illustrated by EUGENE PRATER.	
The King at Balmoral. A Portrait	48
A Talk with "Ralph Connor" George T. B. Davis	49
Bethlehem. A Poem Thomas Comber	53
A Christmas Apparition. A Complete Story Morice Gerard	54
Illustrated by W. H. MARGULIES.	
Christian Mirth. A Sermon Bishop Welldon	62
Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler. A Portrait	66
MISS FALLOWFIELD'S FORTUNE. Serial Story. Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler	67
Prologue and Chap. I. Illustrated by S. SPURRIER	
Red Stag on the Cairngorm Range. A Picture Scott Rankin	82
On Outpost Duty Olive Christian Malvery	83
Conversation Corner The Editor	87
Country Life Sixty Years Ago Rev. Canon Augustus Jessop	90
The Closing of Santa Claus' Door. A Complete Anne Warner	93
Story for Children. Illustrated by E. TATTERSALL.	

Continued on next page.

LOW



PRICES.

CONTENTS—continued.

	PAGE
Stories of Our Ragged School Work Sir John Kirk	90
Grandmother's Patchwork. A Poem Elizabeth B. Piercy	98
Children's Pages :—Our Radiography Fund	99
The Little Merivales' Happy Christmas Frederica J. Turle	99
Sunday Talks: "Salt is Good" Rev. A. Averell Ramsey	102
The New Year. A Poem Frank H. Sweet	103
The Foolish Rose	103
Sweet is the Work. Music E. Burritt Lane, Mus.B.	104
Seed Thoughts for the Quiet Hour	105
Sunday School Pages	107
Life's Chequer Board. A Complete Story Helen Wallace	109
Illustrated by HOWARD SOMERVILLE.	
The Sundial. A Poem Daisy Beacham	159
The League of Loving Hearts	160

Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post.

All MSS. submitted to the Editor must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, and should be addressed to "The Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, E.C." While every care is taken to ensure the safety of MSS., the Editor can accept no responsibility for MSS.

Most of the Original Drawings of the Illustrations in this Magazine are for sale. Terms may be had on application to the publishers, Cassell & Company, Ltd., La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

There is no occasion to **MAGNIFY** the value of

BIRD'S CUSTARD POWDER

The Festive Season.
BIRD'S Custard—Rich and Delicious with Plum Puddings.
BIRD'S Custard Powder—The unfailing resource of every successful Hostess when catering for large or small parties.

NO EGGS!
NO RISK!
NO TROUBLE!

VINOLIA SOAP.

Study

the laws of Nature, and learn to make most of her resources. Buy a tablet of Vinolia Soap and realise how wonderful these are. Your complexion will beam in gratitude.



Premier, 4d.;
Toilet (Otto), 10d.;
Vestal, 2 6.



REVOLVING



STATIONARY



TIP.

WOOD-MILNE RUBBER HEELS

Produce more health to the square inch than anything else.

They protect the Nerves, prevent City headache, weariness, and fatigue.

The buoyancy they impart reminds one of holidays and walking upon the Downs.

Look for the name WOOD-MILNE on the Heel. They are the only ones that will last the boot out.

THE REVOLVING HEEL COMPANY, PRESTON.



*Oo dreeffly run down,
Sammy; have some of my*

BOVRIL

SMB



Nothing is more appetising than freshly-made Mustard in a daintily clean Mustard pot, and nothing more conducive to sound digestion.

Colman's MUSTARD

is the test of excellence.
Accept no substitute.

W. & A. Colman, Ltd., London & New York

THE QUIVER

ANNUAL VOLUME, 1908

AUTHORS

CHARLES M. ALEXANDER
E. BOYD BAYLY
J. J. BELL
WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN
R. J. BUCKLEY
THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE
A. B. COOPER
LILLIAS CAMPBELL DAVIDSON
G. T. B. DAVIS
THE BISHOP OF DORRING
REV. DR. HENRY VAN DYKE
DR. FITCHETT
ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER
CHARLES H. GABRIEL
MORICE GERARD
AGNES GIBERNE
DR. WILFRED T. GRENFELL, C.M.G.
REV. CANON AUGUSTUS JESSOPP
COULSON KERNAHAN
SIR JOHN KIRK

DAVID LYALL
REV. F. W. MACDONALD
S. MACNAUGHTAN
OLIVE CHRISTIAN MALVERY
ELLEN T. MASTERS
REV. F. B. MEYER
REV. DR. J. R. MILLER
NORA TYNAN O'MAHONY
REV. A. AVERELL RAMSEY
BLANCHE ST. CLAIR
SIR ALEXANDER R. SIMPSON
GIPSY SMITH
ANNIE S. SWAN
KATHARINE TYNAN
REV. CANON VAUGHAN
HELEN WALLACE
ANNE WARNER
C. E. C. WEIGALL
BISHOP WELLDON
DAVID WILLIAMSON

ARTISTS

H. L. BACON
H. M. BROCK
CHRISTOPHER CLARK, R.I.
LUCIEN DAVIS, R.I.
J. DURDEN
J. FINNEMORE, R.I.
W. RUSSELL FLINT
P. B. HICKLING
CHARLES HORRELL
WILMOT LUNT
W. H. MARGETSON
H. R. MILLAR

CARTON MOORE-PARK
OSWALD MOSER, R.I.
H. M. PAGET
R. B. M. PAXTON
W. RAINEY, R.I.
T. H. ROBINSON
HOWARD SOMERVILLE
STEVEN SPURRIER
G. L. STAMPA
GEORGE M. SULLIVAN
PERCY TARRANT
SIMON HARMON VEDDER

CASELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED

LONDON, PARIS, NEW YORK, TORONTO AND MELBOURNE

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
ADAMS-ACTON, MRS.: "COME ALONG"	792	CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON, ONE. By S. MACNAUGHTAN	41
ADCOCK, FRED.: "THE FISHERMEN'S HOME, YARMOUTH"	990	CHRISTMAS, APPARITION, A. By MORICE GERARD	51
" " "THE HAUNTED HOUSE"	320	CHRISTMAS AT BETHLEHEM. By F. DE HAENSEN	121
ADESTE FIDELES. By NORMAN HOWARD	437	CHRISTMAS BABY, THE. By NORA TYNAN O'MAHONY	27
ADVERSITY. By A. B. COOPER	758	CHRISTMAS, THE MEANING AND MESSAGE OF. By REV. DR. J. R. MILLER	24
ALEXANDER, C. M.: "MEMORIES OF SAM P. JONES"	226	CHURCH ACROSS THE FIELDS, THE. By W. ELLISON	1214
" " "SUCCESSFUL HYMNS OF TO-DAY"	763	CHURCH BUILDING, ROMANCES OF. By T. W. WILKINSON	371
AMERICAN TOUR, MY. By GIPSY SMITH	163	CLARK, THE LATE SIR ANDREW: "THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN"	190
AMERICA'S GOSPEL HYMN WRITERS. By J. KENNEDY	567	CLIFFORD, EDWARD. By J. QUIGLEY	1071
ANNE MARSHAM'S SON. By C. E. C. WEIGALL	992	CLOSING OF SANTA CLAUS' DOOR, THE. By ANNE WARNER	91
AUNT LAVINIA. By MAY WYNNE	1075	COALS OF FIRE. By A. B. COOPER	781
AUNTIE JANE'S PIANO. By ELISE JEANETTE OXENHAM	362	COME ALONG. By MRS. ADAMS-ACTON (JEANIE HIRING)	792
BAD MANNERS. By ISABEL BIDDOKE-ALDER	520	COMING OF THE DOVE, THE. By KATHARINE TYNAN	745
BALLIOL, M. A.: "NEIGHBOURS"	618	COMPETITION FOR "QUIVER" READERS, A NEW	591, 927, 1023
BARNABO'S SUCCESSOR, DR. By R. MCDIE-SMITH	547	CONNOR, RALPH. By GEORGE T. B. DAVIS	49
BARNES OF THE CHURCH, FAMOUS. By T. W. WILKINSON	803	CONVERSATION CORNER. By THE EDITOR	87, 204, 266, 308, 493, 611, 659, 774, 879, 958, 1070, 1164
BATCHELOR, MARGARET: "THE MYSTERY OF THE MONEY BOX"	537, 634	COOPER, A. B.: "STORIES ILLUSTRATING POPULAR HYMNS"	
BATEMAN, CHARLES T.: "THE MISSIONARY OUTLOOK: BISHOP INGHAM'S VIEWS"	174	"A Man Indeed"	321
BATES, J. V.: "GIVING AND SAVING"	1112	"A Supreme Test"	456
BAYLY, E. BOYD: "HER DEBT OF HONOUR" 903, 931, 1041	241	"Adversity"	754
" " "NANCY AND HER SMALL HOLDING"	241	"Coals of Fire"	781
BAZAARS, NOVEL NOTIONS FOR. By C. E. SEARLE	687	"Lead, Kindly Light"	288
BELIEFS OF UNBELIEF, THE. By DR. W. H. FITCHETT	215, 342	"The Call"	703
BELL, J. J.: "THE DREAM"	196	"The Dawn Light"	414
BELLINGTON, M. F.: "SURVIVING CRIMEAN NURSES"	739	COUNTRY DOCTOR, THE. By DAVID GRAYSON	591
BINNIE-CLARK, G.: "WOMEN'S CHANCES IN CANADA"	1108	COUNTRY LIFE SIXTY YEARS AGO. By REV. CANON AUGUSTUS JESSOP	90
BLACK EAGLE'S NEW THEOLOGY. By EDEBERT GREGORY	595	CRIMEAN NURSES, SURVIVING. By MARY FRANCES BELLINGTON	739
BLIND BARRISTER, AUSTRALIA'S	1006	" " "ONLY A SLAVEY"	549
BLYTH, GREGORY: "HOMELESS AND FRIENDLESS IN LONDON"	441	CROSBY, FANNY, AT EIGHTY-SEVEN. By GEORGE T. B. DAVIS	155
BONNETS, DAINTY, FOR LITTLE CHILDREN. By ELLEN T. MASTERS	1194	CROSS, F. J.: "GWENNY'S CONQUEST"	759
BOOKS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED ME. By REV. F. W. MACDONALD, M.A.	504	CUTTING, MARY STEWART: "ON THE RIDGE"	493
BRAZIL NUT, THE TRUE STORY OF A. By L. R. DOUGLAS	252	DABBLER IN STOCKS, A. By MARIAN G. JOHNSTONE	117
BROCKWAY, A. FENNER: "YOUNG MEN IN LONDON"	526	DAISY CHAIN, THE. By LIZZIE LAWSON	138
BROOKE-ALDER, ISABEL: "BAD MANNERS"	229	DAN AND DUCKY. By K. E. VERHAM	754
" " "LONDON'S HOMELESS WOMEN"	613	DANDELION CLOCK, THE. By BRIDGET O'BRIEN	1181
BROWN, PASTOR ARCHIBALD G. By NORMAN FRASER	296	DAVIDSON, LILLIAN CAMPBELL: "TWO LITTLE SILK SHOES"	518
BROWN, THE REV. CHARLES	517	DAVIDSON, T. M.: "WHEN COMRADES ARE TAKEN"	917
BRUNLES, ANNIE: "A TERRIBLE RESPONSIBILITY"	533	DAWN LIGHT, THE. By A. B. COOPER	414
BRYAN, WILLIAM JENNINGS: "HUSBAND AND WIFE: THE FIRST WISE RULE"	655	DEACON'S MISTAKE, THE. By FRANK ABRAMS	977
BUCKLEY, ROBERT J.: "THE PEACEMAKER"	474	DECORATING A CHURCH FOR EASTER	451
" " "THE SOUL OF THE MUSIC"	1087	DESERTED SANCTUARIES. By T. W. WILKINSON	1093
BUILDING A MEN'S BIBLE CLASS. By GEORGE T. B. DAVIS	1123	DESMOND LAMONT'S AWAKENING. By KATE SEATON	723
BURIED SCRIPTURE NAMES	440, 541	DOERING, THE BISHOP OF: "THE EXALTATION OF WOMANHOOD IN CHRIST"	495
CANADA, CHANCES IN. By REV. ALBERT G. MACKINSON	257	DOUGLAS, L. R.: "THE TRUE STORY OF A BRAZIL NUT"	252
CANADA, WOMEN'S CHANCES IN. By G. BISSIE-CLARK	1108	DOUGLAS, THEO: "GRANNY WHITMAN'S HEART"	549
CANADIAN SETTLER, SNAPSHOTS OF THE. By REV. ALBERT G. MACKINSON	423	DOWN EAST. By G. HIRST	989
CARLISLE, THE BISHOP OF: "HOME DIFFICULTIES"	605	"DREADNOUGHT," THE: THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK SAILORS. By ELLA G. GRUNDY	674
CHILD PORTRAITURE, A MASTER IN. MR. RICHARD SPEARHIT AND HIS WORK. By GREGORY BLYTH	613	DREAM, THE. By J. J. BELL	199
CHILDREN: ARE THEY HAPPIER THAN THEY WERE? By PHILIP WEST	1154	DULCIE'S DISOBEDIENCE. By FLORENCE DAVIDSON	1113
CHILDREN'S PAGES	99, 252, 337, 437, 537, 634, 738, 813, 922, 1017, 1114, 1209	DURHAM CATHEDRAL, ROMANCE OF. By AMBROSE REID	1116
CHRIST, NEW CONCEPTIONS OF. Three Pictures by American Artists	564	DYKE, REV. DR. HENRY VAN: "OUT OF DOORS IN THE HOLY LAND"	624
CHRISTIAN MILITIA. By BISHOP WELDON	62	FAMES, ELISE M.: "MOLLIE'S CORNER"	732
CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND CHINA'S NATIONAL LIFE. By SIR ALEXANDER H. SMITHSON	304	EASTER, DECORATING A CHURCH FOR	451
		EASTER IN ART. By CLARENCE WILLOUGHBY	479
		EAT TOO MUCH, DO WE? By A. PHYSICIAN	1198
		ECHOES FROM LIVING PREACHERS	231, 517
		EDDISON, AMY G.: "THE FLASH IN THE PAN"	411
		EVANS, REV. W. JUSTIN: "THE THIRST FOR GOD"	496

	PAGE
EVENING SHADOWS SOFTLY FALL. By W. CURRIE COOKE	1191
EXALTATION OF WOMANHOOD IN CHRIST, THE. By the BISHOP OF DORSET	498
EXHIBITION, THE MAKING OF AN	715

FALLING LEAVES. By ALLAN BARRETT	1204
FANCY, A. By MARGARET BOYD CARPENTER	809
FATIGUE. By A. PHYLISIAN	1012
FIRST THE CROSS, THEN THE CROWN. By EGBERT GREGORY	1131
FISHERMEN'S HOME, YARMOUTH, THE. Picture and Poem. By A. ST. JOHN ALCOCK	900
FITCHETT, DR.: "THE BELIEFS OF UNBELIEF"	215, 342
FORBIDDING THE BANNS. By CLIFFORD MILLS	918
FOWLER, ELLEN THORNEYCROFT: "MISS FALLOWFIELD'S FORTUNE." Serial Story	67, 179, 205, 376, 482, 553, 602, 777, 855, 901, 1058, 1111
FROM MOEN TILL EVE. By W. F. G. CLATWORTHY	1152

GABRIEL, CHARLES H. "HOW A GOSPEL SONG IS WRITTEN"	867
"GAUS": THE NEW BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN GENIUS OF THE FAMILY, THE. By SIGMUND HARMON VEDDER	1153
GERARD, MORICE: "A CHRISTMAS APPARITION"	54
GIBBERNE, AGNES: "HOW THEY CAME TOGETHER"	282
GILBERT'S WIFE. By LENA TYACK	1090
GIVING AND SAVING. By J. V. BATES	1112
GOSPEL IN DARKEST AFRICA, THE.	319
GOSPEL SONG: HOW WRITTEN. By CHARLES H. GABRIEL	867
GRAHAM, SCOTT: "A TROUBLED HEART"	232
"ONLY EDITH"	1025
GRANNY WHITMAN'S HEART. By THOMAS DOUGLAS	346
GRAN'S LITTLE GIRL. By DORA POPPLESTONE	499
GRAYSON, DAVID: "THE COUNTRY DOCTOR"	893
GREGORY, E.: "BLACK EAGLE'S NEW THEOLOGY"	505
"FIRST THE CROSS, THEN THE CROWN"	1131
GREENFELL, DR. WILFRED T., C.M.G.: "WHY I AM AGAINST LIQUOR"	219
GRIFFITHS CHURCHYARD. By A. FRASER ROBERTSON	428
GUTTENBERG, V.: "TWIST BEAUTY AND DUTY"	870
GWENY'S CONQUEST. By F. J. CROSS	730

HAENEN, F. DE: "CHRISTMAS AT BETHLEHEM"	33
HAMILL, ISABEL MAUDE: "THE PIANO TUNER"	619
HAMPDEN, MARY: "PIP'S BLACK SHEEP"	709
HEALING TOUCH, A. By ESTHER BRANTHWAITE	510
HEE DEBT OF HONOUR. By E. BOYD BAYLY	903, 931, 1041
HER ONE TREASURE. By CLARA MULHOLLAND	301
HEWITT, A. VERA: "THE DISSATISFIED CHILDREN"	1209
HIGGINS, WALTER: "JOHN DRUMMOND'S CRISIS"	222
HINTS ON THE CARE OF HOME INVALIDS. By DR. A. T. SCHIFFIELD	508
HIS AFFAIR. By KATE MELLERSH	821
HOLDEN, INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. J. STUART	1051
HOLIDAYS. By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR	789
HOME DIFFICULTIES. By the BISHOP OF CARRLEIGH	605
HOMELESS AND FRIENDLESS IN LONDON. By G. BLAITH	444
HOME-MADE TRIMMINGS. By ELLEN T. MASTERS	899
HOPE'S FRUITFUL. By ETHEL W. YOUNG	1105
HOSPITALITY, GIVEN TO. By the REV. F. B. MEYER	815
HOUSE OVER THE WAY, THE. By CORA LAINES	681
HOW NELLIE HELPED. By ESTHER BRANTHWAITE	693
HOW THEY CAME TOGETHER. By AGNES GIBBERNE	282
HUMILITY, THE DUTY OF. By the REV. ARTHUR W. ROBINSON, D.D.	975
HUSBAND AND WIFE: THE FIRST WISE RULE. By WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN	635
HYMNS OF TO-DAY, SUCCESSFUL. By CHARLES M. ALEXANDER	763

INASMUCH. By DOROTHY OWEN	809
IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH: A TALK WITH THE REV. A. J. WALDRON. By NORMAN FRASER	717
INDIAN BISHOP, THE. By D. A. WILLEY	1031
INSURANCE CAN DO FOR A WOMAN, WHAT. By ELIA G. GRENBY	826

JESSOPP, REV. CANON AUGUSTUS: "COUNTRY LIFE SIXTY YEARS AGO"	90
JOHN DRUMMOND'S CRISIS. By WALTER HIGGINS	222
JOINED TO HIS IDOLS. By GEORGE QUIVERING	881
JONES, MEMORIES OF SAM P. By C. M. ALEXANDER	226

KELLOGG, DR. J. H.: "THE FATHER OF FORTY CHILDREN." By GEORGE T. B. DAVIS	259
KERNANAN, COULSON: "A SOAP-BUBBLE FANCY"	889
KIRK, SIR JOHN: "OUR RAGGED SCHOOL WORK"	96
KNIGHT, RHODE: "THE RING AND ITS STORY"	331

LANE, E. BURRITT, M.C.S.B.: "SWEET IS THE WORK." Music	104
LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT. By A. B. COOPER	208
LEAGUE OF LOVING HEARTS, THE	160, 256, 352, 418, 544, 735, 640, 1120

LEE, REV. A. HAMPDEN: "TEXTS FROM TOWNS":— London, Glasgow, and Birmingham	577
Exeter, Penzance, Halifax, and Wolverhampton	1166
LIFE'S CHEQUER BOARD. By HELEN WALLACE	109
LIGHT AT EVENTIDE. By ELIZABETH EARNSHAW	1122
LINCOLN CATHEDRAL, THE NORTH AISLE OF	1200
LINEN, HOUSE AND TABLE. By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR	996
LINES, WHAT MAY BE DONE WITH A YARD OF. By ELLEN T. MASTERS	199
LITTLE MERIVALES' HAPPY CHRISTMAS, THE. By FREDERICA J. TUCKLE	99
LONDON'S RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS. By J. K. MACLEAN	1051
LOST IN THE BUSH. By D. L. WOOLMER	396
LYALL, DAVID: "THE MAN FROM SOUTH AFRICA"	167

MACAULAY IN ANECDOTE, LORD. By J. A. MANSON	813
MACDONALD, REV. F. W.: "BOOKS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED ME"	504
MACKINNON, REV. A. G.: "CHANCES IN CANADA"	237
"SNAPSNOTS OF THE CANADIAN SETTLER"	423
MACLEAN, J. KENNEDY: "AMERICA'S GOSPEL HYMN WRITERS"	567
"LONDON'S RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS"	1051
MACNAUGHTAN, S.: "ONE CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON"	41
MAKING OF A MAN, THE. By ANNIE S. SWAN	17
MAN FROM SOUTH AFRICA, THE. By DAVID LYALL	167
MAN INDEED, A. By A. B. COOPER	321
MARRIAGE, C.: "TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE"	801
MASTERS, ELLEN T.: "DAINTY BONNETS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN"	1191
"HOME MADE TRIMMINGS"	899
"WHAT MAY BE DONE WITH A YARD OF LINEN"	199
"WORK FOR ODD MOMENTS"	388

MEDICAL PROFESSION, NOBILITY OF THE. By SIR ALEXANDER R. SIMPSON	1080
MELLERSH, KATE: "HIS AFFAIR"	821
MEYER, REV. F. B.: "GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY"	815
MILLER, REV. DR. J. R.: "THE MEANING AND MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS"	24
MILLS, CLIFFORD: "FORBIDDING THE BANNS"	918
MISS FALLOWFIELD'S FORTUNE. Serial Story. By ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER	67, 179, 205, 376, 482, 553, 602, 777, 855, 901, 1058, 1111
MISSIONARY OUTLOOK, THE: BISHOP INGHAM'S VIEWS. By CHARLES T. BATEMAN	174
MOLLIE'S CORNER. By ELSIE M. FAMES	732
MOORE, FREDERICK: "PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT: A CHARACTER SKETCH"	751
MULHOLLAND, CLARA: "HER ONE TREASURE"	301
MULLEY, JANE: "OUR DIAMOND WEDDING"	367
"THE NEW YEAR"	163
MYSTERY OF THE MONEY BOX, THE. By MARGARET BACHELOR	537, 631

NANCY AND HER SMALL HOLDING. By E. BOYD BAYLY	241
NANCY'S LOVE STORY. By NORA TYNAN O'MAHONY	572
NANNEN'S CARRIER PIGEON	925
NEIGHBOURS. By M. A. BALLOL	618
NORWAY, CHILDREN IN. By LILLA JACOBSEN	728
NURSING AS A CAREER: A TALK WITH MISS EVA C. LUCKES. By NORMAN FRASER	940

	PAGE		PAGE
O'MAHONY, NORA TYNAN: "THE CHRISTMAS BABY"	27	SQUIRE'S HOUSEHOLD, THE. By JOHN SAVILLE JUDG ...	1178
" " " " "NANCY'S LOVE STORY"	573	STORIES ILLUSTRATING POPULAR HYMNS. By A. R. COOPER	238, 321, 414, 456, 581, 703, 758
ONLY A SLAVEY. By F. J. CROSS	919	STRANGE ART GALLERY, A. By B. J. HYDE	279
ONLY EDITH. By SCOTT GRAHAM	1025	SUNDAY SCHOOL PAGES	107, 251, 350, 446, 542, 638, 731, 829, 925, 1021, 1117, 1215
ON OUTPOST DUTY. By OLIVE CHRISTIAN MALVERY ...	83	SUNDAY SERVICES FOR MEN. By DAVID WILLIAMSON ...	819
ON THE RIDGE. By MARY STEWART CUTTING	430	SUNDAY TALKS. By the REV. A. AVERELL RAMSEY ...	102, 253, 357, 438, 510, 656, 739, 815, 922, 1017, 1114, 1211
ORDEAL OF DONALD FRASER, PROBATIONER, THE. By GRAHAM BROWN	1170	SUNSHINE AND SNOW. Drawn by E. DOUGLAS	To face 3
OSGOBY TEASPOONS, THE. By BEATRICE ROSENTHAL ...	311	SUPREME TEST, A. By A. B. COOPER	465
OUT OF DOORS IN THE HOLY LAND. By REV. DR. HENRY VAN DYKE	621	SUSSEX OUSE, ON THE BANKS OF THE. By HENRY E. MASKELL	1184
OWEN, DOROTHY: "INASMUCH"	809	SWAN, ANNIE S.: "THE MAKING OF A MAN"	17
OXENHAM, ELSIE JEANETTE: "AUNTIE JANE'S PIANO"	362	"SWEET IS THE WORK." Music. By E. BURRITT LANE, MUS.D.	104
PAPER A ROOM, HOW TO. By DOROTHY VIRTUE HOPKINSON	991	TEAR-DROPS, THE. By OLIVE HAWARD	1013
PIANO TUNER, THE. By ISABEL MAUDE HAMILL	619	TERRIBLE RESPONSIBILITY, A. By ANNIE BRUNSON	531
PIP'S BLACK SHEEP. By MARY HAMPDEN	709	TEXTS FROM TOWNS. By REV. A. HAMPTON LEE:—	
PLEASANT REFLECTIONS. By ELIZABETH EARNSHAW ...	848	London, Glasgow, and Birmingham	577
POPPESTONE, DORA: "GRAN'S LITTLE GIRL"	499	Exeter, Penzance, Halifax, and Wolverhampton ...	1166
PREACHER, HINTS TO THE YOUNG. By NORMAN FRANKS ...	1157	THAT BOY. By FRANK H. SWEET	630
QUEEN ALEXANDRA, STORIES OF. By DAVID WILLIAMSON	3	THAT LITTLE GREEN POT. By BRIDGET O'BRIEN	383
QUIGLEY, J.: "EDWARD CLIFFORD: THE STORY OF A WONDERFUL LIFE"	1001	THIRTY YEARS TO THE MAKING OF A SERMON. By MACK ALL	602
"QUIVER" BAZAAR COMPETITION, THE: SALE OF GOODS	478	THREE CHOIRS' FESTIVAL, THE. By CLARENCE WILLOUGHBY	953
"QUIVER" COMPETITION, A NEW	591	TROUBLED HEART, A. By SCOTT GRAHAM	232
QUIVERING, GEORGE: "JOINED TO HIS IDOLS"	881	TURK. By "BROWN LINNET"	441
RADIOGRAPHY FUND, OUR	99, 337, 437	'TWIN BEAUTY AND DUTY. By VIOLET GUTTENBERG ...	870
RAGGED SCHOOL WORK, STORIES OF OUR. By SIR JOHN KIRK	96	TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE. By CAROLINE MARRIAGE	801
RAMSEY, REV. A. AVERELL: "SUNDAY TALKS"	102, 253, 357, 438, 510, 636, 730, 815, 922, 1017, 1114, 1211	TWO LITTLE SILK SHOES. By LILLIAS CAMPBELL DAVIDSON	518
READY FOR SANTA CLAUS. Picture. By PERCY TARRANT	To face 163	TYACK, LENA: "GILBERT'S WIFE"	1660
REES, ELSIE: "THAT WILL DO"	1021	TYNAN, KATHARINE: "THE COMING OF THE DOVE" ...	745
RESPONSIBILITY OF ART, THE. By DOROTHY HILTON ...	1007	VAUGHAN, REV. CANON: "THE RECOGNITION OF GOD IN NATURE"	1201
ROBERTSON, A. F. "GREYFRIARS CHURCHYARD"	428	VENICE, SUNDAY IN. By DORA M. JONES	512
ROBINSON, REV. DR. ARTHUR W.: "THE DUTY OF HUMILITY"	973	VILLAGE EPISODE, A. By H. STOCKLEY	403
ROOSEVELT, PRESIDENT. A CHARACTER SKETCH. By FREDERICK MOORE	751	VIRTUE OF A NAME, THE. By REV. ALEXANDER SMELLIE, M.A., D.D.	817
ROSENTHAL, BEATRICE: "THE OSGOBY TEASPOONS" ...	311	WALLACE, HELEN: "LIFE'S CHEQUER BOARD"	109
SAILORS, THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK: THE "DREAD-NOUGHT." By ELLA G. GRUNDY	671	" " " " "WRIT IN WATER"	810
ST. CLAIR, BLANCHE: "HOLIDAYS"	789	WARNER, ANNE: "THE CLOSING OF SANTA CLAUS' DOOR"	93
" " " " "HOUSE AND TABLE LINEN"	906	WASTE AND WEALTH. By REV. T. YATES	1073
" " " " "SPRING-CLEANING"	508	WEIGALL, C. E. C.: "ANNE MARSHAM'S SON"	992
SALVAGE. By MAUD SHIELDS	1205	WELLDON, BISHOP: "CHRISTIAN MIRTH"	62
SCHOFIELD, DR. A. T.: "HINTS ON THE CARE OF HOME INVALIDS"	598	WILKINSON, T. W.: "DESERTED SANCTUARIES"	1198
SEARLE, C. E.: "NOVEL NOTIONS FOR BAZAARS"	667	" " " " "FAMOUS BARN OF THE CHURCH"	801
SEED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR	105, 249, 306, 409, 531, 593, 698, 799, 891, 987, 1035, 1176	" " " " "ROMANCES OF CHURCH BUILDING"	371
SELBY, REV. T. G.	231	WILLIAMSON, DAVID: "SINGERS AT SUNDAY SERVICES"	465
SIMPSON, SIR ALEXANDER R.: "CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND CHINA'S NATIONAL LIFE"	308	" " " " "STORIES OF QUEEN ALEXANDRA"	3
" " " " "THE NOBILITY OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION"	1080	" " " " "SUNDAY SERVICES FOR MEN"	819
SINGERS AT SUNDAY SERVICES. By DAVID WILLIAMSON	465	WILLEY, DAY ALLEN: "THE INDIAN BISHOP"	1033
SMELLIE, REV. ALEX., AN APPRECIATION OF THE	473	WINDOW, THE MODERN. By WILLIAM BEAUMONT ...	600
" " " " "THE VIRTUE OF A NAME"	817	WOMEN'S CHANCES IN CANADA. By G. BESSIE CLARK ...	1118
SNOW PICTURES, KING WINTERS'	13	WOOLMER, D. L.: "LOST IN THE BUSH"	396
SOAP-BUBBLE FANCY, A. By COULSON KEENAHAN ...	889	WORK FOR ODD MOMENTS. By ELLEN T. MASTERS ...	398
SODOR AND MAN, THE NEW BISHOP OF (DR. DRURY). By "GAUS"	276	WRIT IN WATER. By HELEN WALLACE	840
SOUL OF THE MUSIC, THE. By R. J. BUCKLEY	1087	WYNNE, MAY: "AUNT LAVINIA"	1075
SPAIN: THE KING'S ELDER SON. By GEORGE REES ...	1213	YATES, REV. T.: "WASTE AND WEALTH"	1073
SPRING-CLEANING. By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR	508	YORK MINSTER, THE ROMANCE OF. By A. REID	1018
SQUIRE'S DAUGHTER, THE. By SIMON HARMON VEDDER ...	1024	YOUNG, ETHEL: "HOPE'S FRUITION"	1105
		YOUNG MEN AND THE DEMAND OF THE AGE. By C. ARMSTRONG SALES	701
		YOUNG MEN IN LONDON. By A. FENNER BUCKWAY ...	525





The permission of the Artistic Co., 74, New Bedford Street, B.

SUNSHINE AND SNOW

(From the Picture by E. Douglas)

THE QUIVER.

STORIES OF QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

By David Williamson.



ONE day in Queen Alexandra's girlhood she asked two of her friends to write down their dearest wish. She wrote, as her own chief wish, "Above everything else, I should like to be loved." In the

years that have followed she has gained that wish.

Ever since the Queen came to this country as a beautiful bride, she has been regarded with the deepest affection by the nation. When she ascended to queenship, the fierce light that beats upon a throne only revealed still more clearly her charm and goodness. She has set a noble example of sympathy for the poor and suffering, and has not confined her charity to gifts, but has acquainted herself personally with many a good work and its organisers. Of her private acts of kindness and sympathy there are innumerable examples. I am venturing to put a few of them on record in this article, leaving them to speak for themselves as to one who is truly "Her Most Gracious Majesty."

The Queen and the Phonograph.

One of the most touching uses to which the phonograph has been put occurred in connection with the Queen. One of the former ladies-in-waiting to her mother, the late Queen of Denmark, lay dying in Copenhagen. She had known Queen Alexandra

since infancy, and the Queen's father mentioned in one of his letters that the old lady had expressed a wish to speak to the Queen once more before her death. The Queen's thoughtful sympathy devised a way to cheer the dying lady-in-waiting. She spoke into a phonograph, and sent it to Copenhagen. The message of affection sounded forth in the Queen's own tones, and the dying woman gave a sigh of content, and with the words, "God bless you, dear," she passed away.

The Queen and the Bereaved.

It is the hour of sorrow that tests the reality of sympathy. No one can doubt that the Queen has "a heart at leisure from itself, to soothe and sympathise." On hundreds of occasions the grief of a home has been assuaged by the personal condolence of the Queen. Often she sends a verse in her own handwriting to accompany a wreath. For instance, when Mrs. Gladstone died, the Queen wrote:

IN MEMORY OF DEAR MRS. GLADSTONE.

It is but crossing with a bated breath,
A white set face! a little strip of sea,
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
More beautiful, more precious, than before.

ALEXANDRA.

A Surprise Visit to an Invalid.

Last spring one of the Court officials had been lying ill for weary weeks. In the midst of all her many engagements the Queen remembered him. She drove down one afternoon to inquire after the invalid. His little daughters were in the drawing-room when suddenly the man-servant announced "The Queen." The children were a little dismayed, but only for a few moments, as Queen Alexandra put them quickly at



(Photo: Vandyk)
OPENING OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
EXHIBITION.

their ease by her kindly and gentle questions about their father. The visit of her Majesty, and the thoughtful sympathy it implied, did more for the invalid than a dozen bottles of medicine. When Sir James Paget had blood-poisoning in 1871, the Queen (who was then Princess of Wales) sent a special nurse and called personally at Norwood to inquire after her physician's welfare.

Her Love of Children.

Not long ago the Queen was spending a day with her sister, the Empress Marie of Russia, sight-seeing. It happened that in the afternoon she was visiting some barracks, and the officers immediately requested that their Majesties would honour them by taking tea. The Queen replied: "We should be delighted, but I promised my grandchildren to take tea with them, and I never like to disappoint children."

The Little God-Daughter's Garden.

The Queen never loses her interest in those for whom she has acted as god-mother. In particular, she has been most kind to the children of Lord Curzon, who lost their beautiful mother more than a year ago. The Queen, hearing that little Alexandra Curzon—who was named after her Majesty—was fond of gardening, sent a box of violet

roots to her. The child decided to plant them so that when they came up they should spell "Alexandra." "I should like to help you plant them," said the Queen. "Well, you can put in the full-stop," replied the child.

An Invocation of Blessing.

After a christening at which the Queen had acted as god-mother, her Majesty asked to see the baby's nursery. When she had been shown the room, the Queen walked to one of the windows and wrote on the glass with her diamond ring: "May God's blessing rest on this house and all in it."



QUEEN ALEXANDRA WITH THE EMPRESS OF RUSSIA AND HER BABY.



(Photo: Russell.)

THE KING AND QUEEN LEAVING WINDSOR THE DAY
BEFORE THE OPERATION ON THE KING IN 1902.

"My Hospital."

A statue of the Queen is going to be erected in the grounds of the London Hospital as a permanent memorial of the intense sympathy shown by her Majesty ever since she became President of the hospital. On several occasions the Queen has visited the hospital, and in the spring of this

year she brought her sister, the Empress Marie of Russia, with her at short notice. They remained at the hospital from half-past twelve till three o'clock, displaying the liveliest interest in everything connected with the work. The Queen's memory is as good as that of King Edward, and one of the first requests she made



DUKE OF
CONNAUGHT.

QUEEN OF
ITALY.

QUEEN
ALEXANDRA.

PRINCE KING OF
CHRISTIAN ITALY.

KING
EDWARD.

PRINCE OF
WALES.

PRINCESS
VICTORIA.

(Photo: Hills and Saunders.)

THE KING AND QUEEN WITH THEIR GUESTS, THE KING
AND QUEEN OF ITALY.

was to see some of the improvements which had been mentioned to her as in progress on her last visit. She went to the sitting-room and spoke to the sisters and nurses who were there, and then proceeded to the cookery classes' room, where nurses were busily preparing some tempting dishes for their patients. The



Queens passed through the Luckes Home into the hospital garden, where they received the most enthusiastic greeting from a large company of nurses, doctors, and students. After going through the Queen's Ward, where they spoke kindly to the young patients, they proceeded to the Marie Celeste Ward. It

(Photo: W. and D. Downey.)

A RECENT PORTRAIT OF THE QUEEN



(Photo: F. Ralph.)

THE KING AND QUEEN, TWO OF THEIR DAUGHTERS, SON-IN-LAW (KING HAAKON), AND SEVEN GRANDCHILDREN.

was the Queen's first visit to this department, and she showed the greatest interest in the mothers and infants in the ward.

Chatting with the Queen.

In the receiving room, to which all patients come on their first visit to the



(Photo: W. and R. Donneg.)

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

With gracious sympathy she spoke to one mother whose baby had died the day before, and she asked the age, weight, and proposed names of all the infants.

hospital, the Queen went and chatted to a man who had a broken arm. When she had left the man announced with great pride to the other patients that the Queen

had been talking to him. They refused to believe it, and chaffed him, saying that her Majesty must have come down to the hospital on purpose to see him. When it was discovered that the man was quite right, and had been honoured by kind inquiries from the Queen, the rest of the patients made a hero of him, and he told his story again and again.

The Queen and the Finsen Rays.

One of the most pleasing incidents of the Royal visit was the call at the Finsen Ray department. It will be remembered that



THE KING AND QUEEN AT A CHRISTENING.

Dr. Finsen, who was himself an invalid suffering from that dire disease lupus, discovered that by the use of rays of light cures could be effected. Before his death Dr. Finsen had the joy of seeing his discovery adopted in his native country, and it was after a visit to Copenhagen that Queen Alexandra instituted the first light apparatus for the cure of lupus at the London Hospital. It is no secret that at first the opinion of experts was not very favourable, but the Queen insisted on the experiment being tried, and two of the London nurses and one of the doctors were sent to Copenhagen to learn. At the present time the Finsen Ray department of the London Hospital is only second in size to the installation of the discoverer at Copenhagen. The Queen told her sister

about the work, and as the Empress Marie had heard of it during her visits to Copenhagen, she was specially interested in the success which has attended its installation at the hospital. Both the Queen and Empress spoke to the poor patients undergoing treatment, and were very delighted to hear from Dr. Sequeira of some of the remarkable cures which had been effected.

The Queen and the Nurses.

The Queen shows the most practical sympathy with the nurses and the nurses' home, and is very anxious that they should be

well cared for at what she describes as "her" hospital. The matron of the London Hospital is the world-famed Miss Eva Luckes, who has raised the ideals of nurses to the highest possible standard, and has given to the London Hospital several years of devoted service. The Hon. Sydney Holland, who is chairman of the London Hospital, may well feel encouraged by the constant interest taken by Queen Alexandra in what is the greatest hospital in the world.

Praising the Chef.

When the Queen was in Paris, she was dining at the house of an old friend, and complimented her on possessing a wonderful chef. The hostess replied that her cook was a Danish woman, and would feel very gratified at the Queen's praise. "If she is a Dane, I should like to see her," said her Majesty, and the cook, much embarrassed at first by being summoned into the presence of Royalty, was soon answering in her native tongue the Queen's questions about herself and the village in Denmark where she had lived. That is one of the many kindly deeds which the Queen is ever delighting to do as she passes through life. She is specially pleased to meet natives of Denmark.



THEIR MAJESTIES' FIRST COURT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE: THE
KING AND QUEEN RECEIVING THEIR GUESTS.

(Drawn by Percy F. S. Spruce.)

The Queen and the Young Singer.

One of the rising singers of the day gave me a most interesting account of her experience in singing before the Queen. Her Majesty is very kind to the musical profession, and frequently commands artistes to perform privately before her at Buckingham Palace. It was an occasion of this kind that my friend described to me. "I was dreadfully nervous when I arrived at the Palace, and as I walked up the great staircase my legs were shaking with fright. Then we waited for a few minutes, and the tension grew still worse. But the moment the Queen arrived in the room I was at my ease. Her Majesty came up to me and chatted as if she had known me for years. She asked who was my teacher, and what I meant to do when I left the College. Then she selected three or four songs from my portfolio, and asked me to sing them. After the first, the Queen crossed the room and said, 'That was charming!' You can imagine I was no longer nervous after such gracious appreciation. It was a lovely piano, and that helped my singing. I don't know when I enjoyed singing so much, for the Queen's comments were so different from the average insipid compliments one receives. She knows all about music, and one felt all the more cheered by her appreciation. When I had finished she thanked me so graciously, and said, 'And now you must have some tea, and be

sure to see the pictures before you go." The Queen is simply sweet—that is the only word I can use. I admired her immensely before that afternoon, but now I love her."

The Queen and the Artist.

How often one reads in the "Court Circular" that the Queen has visited some picture exhibition. This is not simply because her Majesty is fond of looking at pictures, but chiefly because she knows how valuable a Royal visit is to an artist. She is therefore particularly careful to go to the exhibitions of artists whose fame has yet to be made. Often there is only an hour or two's notice given beforehand that the Queen intends to come to the exhibition. In one case I know there was no time for the artist to be summoned, but the Queen was so pleased with his pictures that she commanded his attendance at Buckingham Palace. I was once at a little "private view" in the West End, when the Queen arrived. She walked round the gallery with the artist, examining the pictures very closely. How much that visit of the Queen meant to the artist may be gathered from the fact that Society followed her Majesty's lead, and bought every one of his pictures! He was in very delicate health at the time, and that was one of the reasons why the Queen took the trouble to visit his exhibition. It was a characteristic act of kindness.



(Photo: Russell.)

THE QUEEN WITH HER BROTHER, THE KING OF DENMARK.



THE QUEEN AT A GARDEN PARTY.

A Collection of Keys.

I suppose the Queen has the largest collection of gold keys of any Royalty in the world. She has opened so many hospitals, orphanages, museums, and other institutions, and on every occasion has received souvenir keys, that she has now an embarrassing number of them. Our illustration shows the actual incident of the Queen opening a ward in the splendid Royal Victoria Hospital at Belfast.

The Queen at a Garden Party.

The above picture shows the Queen at a garden-party, where she was specially interested in a little girl who wore sandals. Her Majesty made friends instantly with the little maiden, and asked her how she liked wearing sandals. The child's shyness vanished as she spoke to the Queen with a freedom which amused all the on-lookers.



THE QUEEN OPENING A WARD IN THE ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL, BELFAST.

The King and Queen have been keenly interested in the housing question for several years. It will be recollected that the King, before he came to the throne, was a member of the Royal Commission which inquired into the problem. His Majesty paid a visit incognito to the slums, so that he might see for himself the condition of the poor in the crowded East End. The King and

course, immediate attention was given to the matter. This is a good example of the Queen's sensible criticism.

A Busy Life.

No woman in the Kingdom occupies her time more fully than Queen Alexandra, and I think I may add that no one accomplishes more good. The efforts of Christian



THE KING AND QUEEN VISITING A TENANT IN MODEL DWELLINGS
AT MILLBANK.

Queen visited the model dwellings erected at Millbank and chatted with the tenants. The Queen's housewifely instinct was manifested in a little incident on this occasion.

"More Cupboards."

Her Majesty scrutinised the rooms, and came to the conclusion that more cupboards were necessary to the comfort of the tenants. She mentioned this before she left, and, of

philanthropists like Prebendary Carlile, of the Church Army, General Booth, of the Salvation Army, and many other forms of religious work, engage the Queen's practical sympathy. Once she is convinced of the good which anyone is doing, she is delighted to help such an effort. Happy is the country which has so gracious and good a Royal Consort to a Sovereign whose praises as a Peacemaker and Ruler the world acclaims.

KING WINTER'S SNOW PICTURES.



Photo: Pith, London

A SURREY CHURCH AT CHRISTMAS.



(Photos: 1. Valentine, Hunter; 2. Prish, Kopylov.)

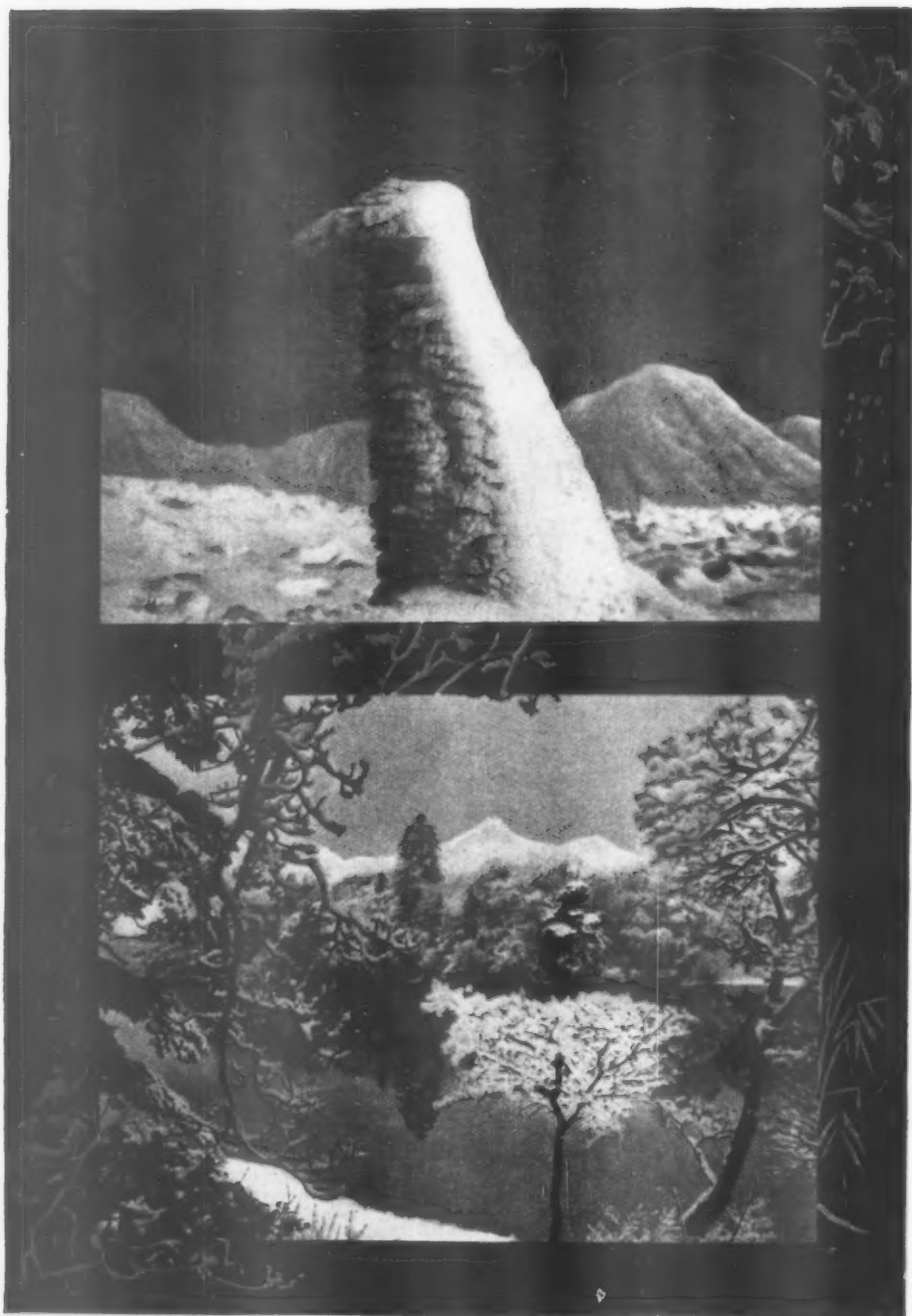
(1). RED DEER ON THE MOUNTAINS.

(2). AN ENGLISH PARK.



(Photo: Valentine and Son, Dundee.)

STUDY OF HOAR FROST.



(Photo G. P. Abraham, Keswick.)

THE GREAT AUK PINNACLE, SCAWFELL, AND A PEEP AT CATBELLS, FROM DERWENTWATER.

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

A Complete Story by Annie S. Swan.

I.

A MAN and a maid stood together in a green country lane with the blossoms of an English spring about them, and the benediction of an April sun. She looked distressed, her face was pale, but her head was high, and her sweet, proud mouth set in a determined curve.

"No," was all she said, but it was enough for the man pleading in front of her, because he could see that she meant her words.

"You—you can't mean to throw me over now, Cecil," he said fiercely, "Why, we've been meant for one another since we were babies. Everybody has expected it. I tell you you can't."

"Everybody must be disappointed then," she replied quietly. "My answer is 'No.'"

"Then I must have a reason," he said savagely. "If you don't give it me, I can strike it for myself."

"Why should I give a reason?" she asked with a little flash of indignation in her beautiful clear eyes. "You are too peremptory, Tony; you forget——"

"I don't forget anything," he said moodily. "The trouble is, I remember too well. It's that beast Thurston that has done this, Cecil. Since ever he came on the scene you've changed to me."

"You may think so, if you choose," she said haughtily. "But there is no truth in it."

"Of course he's got the kudos and the halo," he said bitterly. "But I tell you he's had a glorious chance, a chance that doesn't come in the way of many chaps. If I'd had a ghost of his chance I might have scored too."

"Captain Thurston made his own chance, as you call it Tony," she said in a quiet, incisive voice. "It is what a man ought to do."

"That's the Tommy rot he's put into you, Cecil. I knew it was that. Well, I'll clear so that he may have an open field. But I won't leave my blessing to you. If you marry Thurston, Cecil, you'll not prosper. It wouldn't be right that you should; you've ruined me."

She turned upon him then quickly, her eyes flashing again.

"You have no right to say such things to me, Tony, and it is time somebody told you the truth about yourself. I am sorry I did not do it long ago. You have wasted the last five years, wasted them wholly, and nearly broken

your father's heart. He expected so much from you, and he has got so little. You had no right to be spending his money at Cambridge and giving so little in return. Don't you see how the Rector has aged in the last two years? It is you who have done it, Tony. I am ashamed of you, and angry—and yet you would dare to offer me marriage. You must be mad. Why, you must make a man of yourself before I or any other woman would look at you."

Under the whip of her words the colour rose slowly in his face.

"By Jove," he muttered under his breath. "So that is how you regard me."

"You've been spoiled, Tony, utterly spoiled, because you happen to have a good-looking face and a way with you which people find winning. But I'm tired of you. I'm more than tired, I'm sad and sorry. Why, you are seven-and-twenty, and yet no nearer earning your own living than you were seven years ago."

"That's true, but does it matter, Cecil? Look at Luttrell and Jack Winston."

"Luttrell's father is an earl; Winston's a millionaire. They're not in the running, Tony. Your father is a poor man like mine, and you've no right to go on as you've been doing."

"Then it's 'No,' Cecil—'No,' all through?"

"It's 'No' just now. If I ever marry, Tony, it will be a man, not an idler; a man like——"

"Thurston!" he supplemented in a savage undertone. "Well, I'll clear, and leave you a fair field for your precious captain; but I'll be even with him first."

He turned on his heel, looking very white and desperate, but the girl only smiled. It was a slightly unsteady smile, however, which indicated some tremor beneath. She wanted to cry, but her pride kept the tears back. Her heart was very sore, but she had spoken as her better judgment had dictated. Had she allowed her heart to speak, Tony Faversham's wooing had had a different answer. She could see him striding across the meadow in the direction of the Rectory wood, and it was not until he disappeared from view that she turned away. She wondered what would be the end. Honestly, she did not expect that her words would bear fruit. She had spoken words like them, though perhaps not with such intensity of passion, often in the last

five years, and without result. Yet something told her that the moment of crisis had come.

Cecil Page was the only daughter of the squire of Ardleigh, a small Surrey village, an old-world place on the edge of the moors, scarcely known except to a favoured few. She was a motherless child and had been reared very simply and lovingly by a father

as he lived. Now she was twenty-six. His hope had been that she and the son of his old friend, Robert Faversham, the Rector of Ardleigh, would marry; but of late, like Cecil, he had felt keenly disappointed. For the lad in whom all their hopes had been centred had somehow disappointed them. He had not made any brilliant hit at Cambridge, but

had got into an idle, drifting habit, seeming to grow more careless and irresponsible every day.

It was a matter of which they seldom spoke, the Rector never, but his face had a careworn look, which invariably seemed to deepen when Tony came home.

Tony took a long walk after he left Cecil that day, and had it out with himself on the hills which rose in gently undulating billows all round Ardleigh, sheltering it from every wind that blew. When he came back in the gloaming to the Rectory gate, his face wore a different look. It darkened when he saw someone standing there—a tall military figure he had no difficulty in recognising as the man on whom he blamed everything. Until he had come on the scene—a rank outsider—as Faversham savagely called him—strutting about and putting on airs because he happened to have achieved a little bit of distinction on foreign service—a distinction which Tony frequently said had been absolutely thrust under his nose—Cecil had been perfectly satisfied with



"She could see him striding across the meadow"—p. 17.

who adored her. He was growing old now, and at times wished that he could see his darling settled in a home of her own. He had very little to leave her, and sometimes he blamed himself that he had kept her buried in the quiet Surrey village without giving her a chance to see and be seen. But Cecil was perfectly happy; she had often told him she did not wish to marry so long

him. And now she had given him the cold shoulder thoroughly, and had spoken words he would not be likely to forget in a hurry. How could he be civil to him? He glanced round quickly, wondering whether it would be possible to escape even yet. But reflecting that he might as well have it out, he strode on, and the two men met a few yards from the Rectory gate.

"Evening, Tony. I've been at your place, but the Rector hadn't seen you since lunch, and nobody seemed to know where you had gone."

Thurston was five years older than Tony Faversham, and had the bearing of a man who had realised, in part at least, the meaning of life. He had not Tony's looks, but the idea of strength of body and mind was realised in him, and his face was an honest, pleasant one, such as inspired trust. Tony gloomed upon him with knit brows, and put out his under lip like any spoiled child.

"What right have you to hunt me up? I didn't want you," he said savagely. "Go up yonder," he added, with a jerk of his thumb towards the grey house on the hill. "You're sure of a welcome there, anyhow, you—you miserable usurper."

Then Thurston knew what had happened. But he was too wise to say anything. Even there was a gleam of compassion in his eyes.

"She's changed to me ever since you came here from nobody knows where. And you've boasted and bragged about what you've done till every other honest chap's work is like nothing. That's how women are, without sense of proportion. The chap that makes the most noise gets the innings. But I'll be even yet with both you and her."

He flung himself through the gate, and Thurston stood still a moment, looking after him with a curious mingling of perplexity and sadness in his eyes. The impulse to follow him faded with the reflection that it was worse than useless to discuss any subject with an angry man. He did not regret the anger, however, for anything that would rouse Tony out of his idler's paradise must undoubtedly be good. He liked the lad, and though there were not so very many years between them, he felt towards him as one might feel towards a lovable schoolboy who had not yet realised the meaning of life. Thurston had been asked to dine at the Hall that evening with the Rector and his son, but he was not at all surprised when the old man turned up alone. He seemed less genial than usual and a trifle preoccupied.

Cecil was in apparently high spirits. Never had the colour been so rich and red in her cheeks, or her wit so brilliant, but Thurston detected beneath it a certain furtive anxiety. He had no opportunity for private talk with her, nor indeed did he seek to make it, but left early.

Next morning about ten the Rector rode up to the Hall on his cob, wearing a rueful face. The Squire met him on the door-step

and took from his hand a scrap of paper which bore marks of hasty penmanship.

"Hulloa!" exclaimed the Squire when he had read it. "So he's off!"

"Yes, the housekeeper said he had gone to bed when I got back last night, and I did not go to his room, thinking he might have gone to sleep. Can you explain it?"

"Yes, Rector, I can. He and Cecil have had it out. She told me last night."

"I thought as much. The lad hasn't been himself for several months. I suppose it's Thurston?"

"We've no right to suppose any such thing," said the Squire a trifle testily. "And anyhow Cecil had the right to please herself. I don't want to hurt your feelings, friend, but Tony in his present state is not much to attract any woman. Don't worry about him. It's just possible this may be the making of him."

"He's all I've got," observed the Rector, with a shadow in his kind eyes. "But it's possible you may be right."

So passed Tony Faversham from the ken of Ardleigh, and all who had known and loved him. And for one or two in the old-world village there began forthwith the heart-sickness of hope deferred.

II.

THURSTON stood still on the brow of a little hill, and looked about him with widely interested eyes. He had travelled a long way in a far country to behold the picture now spread before him, and it was good. He had left the train an hour ago, but could see it yet winding like a serpent in and out the curves of the prairie track, its smoke mingling with the delicious clearness of the upper air. Thurston had a curious feeling as if after long exclusion he suddenly found himself in a church. He had never pretended to be a religious man, but the isolation in illimitable space, the feeling of purity and immensity, filled him with awe.

So far as the eye could reach there was nothing to meet it except the rolling billows of the prairie, with a gleam of gold here and there where the wheat ripened in the sun. He felt a little tired, in spite of the uplifting quality of the air, and was glad to sit down for a moment on the brow of the hill and take what bearings he could. He drew out his cigarette case, a dainty thing in gun-metal, with a monogram in sapphires across the corner, and smiled a little at the incongruity it presented.

He did not even light up, but sat in half-dreamy mood gazing about him. He was now within measurable distance of that he had come to see. What would Tony say? It was the uppermost question. What would Tony say, and how should he find him? He could see a thin line of smoke from a hidden dwelling in the far distance, close by the gleam of a freshwater lake. The Indian who had guided him so far had pointed to it, and there left him, to make the rest of the distance alone.

"It would kill me—this ghastly space and stillness!" he muttered as he handled the cigarette, for which he had no taste. "Wonder how Tony has stood it for four years."

Thurston was not an emotional man, but he was conscious of a very strong emotion as he picked himself up and essayed to cover the intervening space. As he came nearer to the shack he saw that there was a handful of sparse trees about it, and some attempt at a little garden railed in with a snake fence. Suddenly, as he looked, someone came out of the door of the shack, attired not in the usual garb of the settler, but in conventional evening dress. Thurston's eyes widened and a strange fear gathered in them. Tony in evening dress in the middle of the desert of despair could have but one meaning surely! His solitude must have touched his brain. Perhaps it was not Tony after all, and yet his height could not be mistaken. Thurston remembered the very poise of his head. He ducked down behind a ridge, imagining the eyes of the owner of the shack turned in his direction, and he was not ready yet. Tony had a bucket in his hand, he bent to the stream with it—the little stream that ran out of the lake—and then returned to the house. Then Thurston set his teeth and plunged forward.

A puppy dog of a breed unknown to him wagged a friendly tail as he approached, and Thurston, stooping to pat him, purposely addressed him in a loud voice, "Hullo, old fellow, good old chappie!"

There was the noise of a chair being pushed back on a rough wooden floor, and Faversham came out. For one unsteady moment the two men regarded one another in silence. Faversham was the first to break it.

"Thurston, where have you come from?"

"From the station with the unholy name of Moose Jaw, in the first instance," he answered cheerily, as he stretched out his hand. "Have you anything to eat? Eight miles across these wastes gives a fellow an appetite it nothing else."

Faversham returned the grip of the hand,

and for a brief moment the two who had parted in anger, on the one side at least, looked into one another's eyes. Then Faversham turned away, but not before the man who had travelled so many miles to see him had observed the tears in his eyes. To keep his own composure he must needs laugh, or there must have happened that scene which is the chief dread of an Englishman's life.

"Tony in evening togs drawing water from the well! I wish I had a snapshot for home consumption! They've drawn many pictures, Tony, in the last year or two, but never one like this."

Faversham smiled, a brief, unsteady smile, but proffered no explanation of the incongruous attire.

"Why are you here?" was all he said. "That'll keep, Tony. In the meantime get me something to eat. I tell you I'm desperate."

"Tell me first if anything has happened to the old man? I dreamed of him last night."

"No, nothing has happened; he's aged a bit, but something will happen soon if you don't come to your senses and come out of these wilds."

"Come in," said Faversham briefly. "There's plenty of a sort. If you're as hungry as you say you'll be able to eat it."

It was partly a pretext to put an end to an awkward moment; nevertheless Thurston did eat and drink while Tony looked on. Then they went out to the little stoep which Faversham had erected with his own hands to shelter the house from the intolerable glare of a midsummer sun, and sat down upon the bench. Thurston took out his cigarette case again, and passed it over. Tony shook his head.

"You're meat and drink and tobacco to me, Dick. Tell me why you are here."

Thurston shook his head. "If it isn't the old man, it must be Cecil. I suppose. How long have you been married?" hazarded Faversham then.

"I wish I could say how long, but she won't look at me," replied Thurston, with his eyes on his cigarette. "I've been to India for three years since we parted, and I'm on leave again. I went straight to Ardleigh; stopped two days; and set out to bring you home. It's a mighty poor way of spending the leave a man has earned as hardly as I earned it, but it had to be done."

"Why?" asked Tony, harshly and without meeting his gaze. Thurston regarding him keenly, however, saw his expression change. He also noticed casually what a different face

it was, the face of an older man; even the hair had whitened a little at the temples, which gave him, for Cecil's sake, a little pang.

"She was right, you know, Tony; this sort of thing can't go on."

"What's the matter with it? It's panning out all right. Last year I cleared a thousand dollars after paying everything, and this year I'll do better than that."

"I don't know how much a thousand dollars is, but anyhow it's too little to pay for this, and I've come to take you back."

Tony shook his head and gave his hand a comprehensive wave across the fields. "In ten days it'll all be ripe, and then when I've got it threshed out I'm going to start on a new house. I'll be sorry to part with the old one. It's here that the fight's been made."

Thurston did not answer, but into his eyes there crept a curious softness.

"I want to know how you found me out," said Faversham then.

"Easy enough. Remember Ridgeway, the little curate who was with your father on my last leave? He's up somewhere in Saskatchewan; he heard of you, and wrote home. What he said worried Cecil—so I'm here."

"It was a lot to do for a chap who cursed you last time we met," said Faversham slowly.

"I didn't do it for you, but for her. She's getting old and her heart's sick, and I don't

stir from this spot without you, Faversham. So there's my hand on it."

Faversham did not take it.

"You'll need to stop and see the wheat up, then," he said slowly. "Tell me more about the old man."

"I've a letter from him among the baggage the Indian promised to fetch over to-morrow. What are you looking at? Perhaps he

took another thought and is bringing it to-night."

"No, it's a buggy," replied Faversham. "And I rather think they've come to fetch me."

"What for?"

"We'll see," replied Faversham, a trifle shamefacedly, as he rose to his feet.

"I haven't heard the explanation of the evening togs yet," said Thurston. "It's the funniest thing I've ever seen."

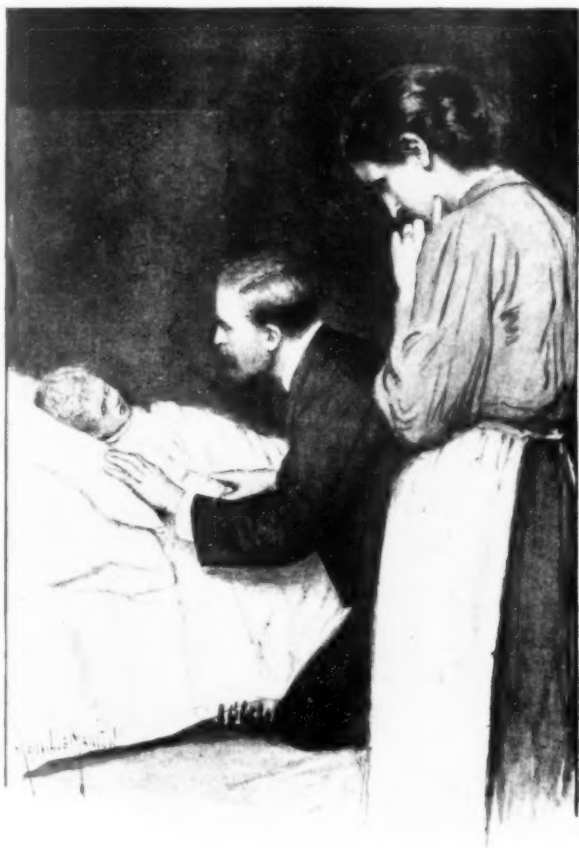
"There's two of us," observed Faversham slowly. "Jim Gresley over at Wildwood, five miles from me straight as the crow flies. We made a compact that we'd observe

some of the decencies of life out here. It's the only way, unless you are content to sink into the muck in which some men find it possible to live."

"I'll tell Cecil that," said Thurston shortly. "It's the sort of thing she'd like to hear."

"They are coming here," said Faversham slowly.

"What do they want you for?" inquired



"He knelt by the child's bed"—p. 22.

Thurston, but Tony did not answer for a moment.

"I'm the only medicine man around here, and there's nobody to prosecute the unqualified beggar who does his best. I had a few books and Timbrell's old medicine chest. Remember Timbrell?"

"Yes."

"Good evening, mate, here I am!"

The vehicle, a tumble-down, dusty waggon that had been made to cover the last mile with incredible speed, drew up with a jerk at the fence, and a lean, brown, half-dressed man leaned out with eagerness on his haggard face.

"Evenin', too," he said sharply, "It's Mister Faversham I want."

"I'm Faversham," replied Tony shortly.

"What is it?"

"I want you this very minnit to Broken Hill. It's my baby, the only one what is left. If she goes it's all up with the missus, and I'll have to pull up stakes, see? I bin to Redwood, but the boss doctor there's drunk!"

"I see! Broken Hill, a goodish bit, isn't it?"

"Other side of Redwood Fork, eleven miles only. Come, Mister, now. It's life or death."

"Will you come, Thurston, or stop till I get back?"

"I'll come," answered Thurston, filled with a mighty curiosity to behold Faversham in this strange new rôle of healer and comforter to comrades in distress.

"Well, take my horses, neighbour, and when we get back yours will be fresh," said Tony. The man nodded, and began to unharness the steaming pair.

They got there within the hour, just as the swift twilight began to darken down. It was not too dark for them to catch the flutter of a woman's white apron at the door of the little shack. They hitched the horses to the post, and all three silently entered the house. Then Thurston stood with his back to the wall, his face a little grim and stern, while he watched Tony Faversham. No detail of the picture was forgotten, the picture he meant to draw for Cecil, perhaps before he slept. Tony had forgotten him, had forgotten the wasted years, the old failures, the shattering of the dreams in the hearts of those who loved him. Beyond a doubt he had come to his own.

He knelt by the child's bed, his face transfigured by the tenderness of his soul. If he could not do much it was mightily done. A young mother who had already buried two, helpless and despairing in a great lone land, almost knelt at his feet when he stood up,

promising her the child would be well by the morning.

When they stepped out into the starlight, ready for the homeward journey, they left peace and hope behind.

"Tony, you're great," observed Thurston, as they waved their hands for the last time.

"I can't believe it's really you."

"I can't do much. It's astonishing how ignorant people are of the simplest facts. I'm a fraud. I shall have to go home and get my degree, Dick, and do the proper thing by them, poor beggars. It's their faith that—that sanctifies the means."

"I shall write before I sleep, perhaps, to Cecil, and to the old man," said Thurston under his breath.

"And what will you say?"

"I'll tell them you've come to your own, that's all; but we can't spare you, Tony. I've come to take you back."

Tony merely smiled, and no other word passed between them until they reached the spot where Faversham had fought the battle and won.

They sat far into the night, but the letters were not written till the next day, and were ready for the Indian when he brought the baggage from Moose Jaw. Then Thurston settled down, apparently to make himself at home in the shack. He wanted to get at the bottom of things, and it was the only way. So he lived the strenuous life of the settler with Faversham, helped him to take in the wheat, and to drive it to the elevator after it was threshed. And he helped Tony with his accounts, too, and discovered that there is money in wheat.

"I can take it easy for a bit now, Dick, and if you're ready for a trip I can go east with you for a couple of weeks before you sail," said Tony at last.

"And what about England?"

Tony shook his head.

"Not yet. I'll go east as far as Montreal, and make inquiries whether they'll allow me to take up the threads at McGill University. For my purpose a Canadian degree would be as good as a Cambridge one, and cost less."

Thurston looked disappointed, but did not seek to argue with him.

Next day letters from England came, answers to those that Thurston had written when he first came out. There were two in Cecil's handwriting. Thurston was not surprised when Tony took his and walked away through the spare trees now glowing with the flame of the late autumn. He opened his own at his leisure. It did not contain much, only a few

words of thanks, and the reiterated behest to bring Tony back. It was getting dark, and Thurston had lit the lamp in the living room when Tony came in. He entered quite quietly, but Thurston felt that there was a new and subtle quality in the atmosphere.

"You're going then, Tony, a little further than down east?"

Faversham nodded.

"Yes, we'll go to-morrow."

Thurston turned his head away for a moment and there was a long silence between them. Faversham was the first to break it.

"She says I'm to stop building the new house, Dick, and that she'll come to the old shack, or not at all."

"She wants to come here, then? I'm not surprised."

"It's the one condition. She writes of the place as if it were Paradise. Dick, what I owe to you!"

He suddenly threw his arms across the table, and buried his face upon them, and there was the sound of strong sobbing in the room.

Thurston rose quietly, went out on the verandah, and closed the door. He had accomplished that for which he had come, obeyed to the uttermost the behest of the woman they both loved.

He could go back now, quietly and bravely as the Englishman will, even when hope is quenched, to the waiting duty.



"He suddenly threw his arms across the table, and buried his face upon them."

The Meaning and Message of Christmas.

By the Rev. Dr. J. R. Miller.

ON the head of the Holy Child was a triple crown. He was called by the angel Saviour, Christ, and Lord, each a royal name. Yet the glory was veiled. The shepherds would know Him, the angel said, by this sign: "A babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." He did not burst upon the world as a Heavenly King when He came. There was no visible crown on His head. No divine glory shone about Him. He came in lowly way.

One reason for his coming so quietly and without visible splendour was that the world might not be awe-stricken. In the song of Zacharias he is called the day-spring. The sun does not burst upon the earth in the morning suddenly in noontide splendour. The brightest day begins in a soft and gentle dawn, only a faint fringe of light, which gradually increases in brightness until at length the sun appears in all its glory. So Jesus came as the day-spring, that men's eyes might not be blinded by the excessive light.

Veiling the Heavenly Radiance.

A miner who had been shut away in utter darkness for thirteen days put a bandage on his eyes at first, when his rescuers reached him, as he could not endure the full light. So the heavenly radiance of the Incarnation had to be veiled in a human life. It was revealed first in helpless infancy, that men could bear to look at it. Christ dawned upon the world as an infant of the poor, and grew up as a peasant carpenter. He was always a lowly man. The people did not see any divine splendour. When one of His disciples, at the very last, asked Him to show them the Father, craving some unusual display of glory, Jesus said: "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known Me? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." For three years He had been revealing the divine glory, but in such gentle ways that the disciples had not dreamed they were looking upon God.

Christmas does not mean the same to all. Some look forward to it only as a time for receiving gifts. They expect to be remembered by their friends. They have visions of happy surprises on Christmas

morning. They have no thought of the day in all its true meaning. They see no Child in the manger, no star in the heavens.

There are those who think truly of Christmas as the birthday of Jesus Christ, but without having any conception of the greatness and glory of His life. Why do we keep Christ's birthday? Why is it observed in so many countries and in such a worshipful way? No anniversary of any other man's birthday means to us what this anniversary means. If we keep it only as we keep other men's birthdays it can have little of blessing for us. It is only when we know something of Him who was born, and when we look to Him as our own Saviour and Lord, that we get from Christmas the blessing it holds for us.

"Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born,
If He's not born in thee,
Thy soul is still forlorn."

"The cross on Golgotha
Will never save thy soul;
The cross in thine own heart
Alone can make thee whole."

A recent periodical had an editorial entitled "A World without Christmas." Readers were asked to think what a different world it would be if Christmas were blotted from its calendar. For if Christmas were taken away, Christ would be taken away too—His beautiful life, His wondrous teaching, His lofty character, His cross, His influence, and all that has been wrought in the world through His name.

A Startling Dream.

Someone has written the story of a strange and startling dream. He dreamed that everything in the Bible referring to Christ had faded out. He opened the old Book and found only blank pages where the Gospels used to be. He sought for the great prophecies which foretold the character and work of the Messiah, but they were all gone. He looked for the promises on which he used to lean so confidently, but not a trace of any of them was to be seen. What would it mean to you if you were to wake some morning to find that there never was a Christmas, that no Christ was ever born at Bethlehem, that all the beautiful Christmas story, as we have heard it from our childhood, is only a mass of legends?

Yet that is all Christmas is to some people. It is only a date in the calendar. They join in the festivities of the day, but that is all. Christ is nothing to them personally.

But there are many to whom Christmas is one of the holiest days in the year. It is full of Christ; not the historical Christ only, but the Christ who is as really in our personal lives to-day as He was in the lives of His friends in Galilee. It was only a helpless baby the shepherds saw lying in the manger that night, but that Child has touched all the world's life. Someone writes of Mary's anxious motherhood:—

- "When Mary sang to Him, I wonder if
His baby hand stole softly to her lips,
And, smiling down, she needs must stop her song
To kiss and kiss again His finger tips,
"I wonder if, His eyelids being shut,
And Mary bending mutely over Him,
She felt her eyes, as mothers do to-day,
For very depth of love grow wet and dim?
"Then did a sudden presage come to her
Of bitter looks and words and thorn-strewn street?
And did she catch her breath and hide her face
And shower smothered kisses on His feet?"

A Note of Pain.

The Christmas story is not all joy. "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul," said the aged Simeon to the mother in prophetic sympathy, as she presented her Child in the temple. There was sorrow mingled in her joy, and she never forgot the words. The Christmas joy always has its notes of pain. While we are singing our glad carols there are those who are weeping. There are homes in which in former years there was luxury, with only gladness, gift-giving, and rejoicing, where now all is changed. A voice is missed in the songs. One who made the brightness of the house a year ago is not here to-day. Or there has been a change in the circumstances. "We are not giving presents this year," one said. The luxury of former days which so many shared has vanished, leaving only bareness, almost want.

There is comfort in such cases, however, in remembering that Christ understands. He was born in poverty, sleeping His first sleep in a manger, on a little pile of hay. The sweetest happiness is often found where poverty dwells.

- "Poverty bought our little lot
Flooded with daisy blooms;
Poverty built our little cot
And furnished all its rooms.
"Yet Peace beams over labour's chair,
Joys at the fireside throng,
While up and down, on Poverty's stair,
Love sings the whole day long."

Christmas finds its holiest meaning in the home. In some of the old pictures the stable of the Nativity is suffused with a soft, gentle light, though it is night and there are no lamps to relieve the darkness. The artist's fancy is true in a spiritual sense. From the Holy Child there poured forth indeed a quiet spiritual light which not only filled His mother's home, but has shed itself abroad, lighting countless homes throughout the world, through all the Christian centuries. Wherever a true mother bends over her baby's cradle, there the light from the Christ-child shines. Every true home should be made happier and sweeter by this Christmastide. We should love each other more and live together more sweetly, after singing our Christmas songs. Wrangling and strife should be impossible after thinking together of the love of Christ.

All hearts should be softer after Christmas. Everything unlovely and unlovable should disappear from our lives when we hear again the angels' song, "On earth peace, good will toward men." The Christmas love should enter our hearts and sweeten all our lives.

There is a little story of a young woman who was spending a day in the country with a party of friends. In the morning, before leaving home, she had gathered a bunch of sweetbrier and put it in her bosom. She forgot that it was there, but all day long, wherever she was, she smelled the spicy fragrance and wondered whence it came. When she returned home in the evening, there was the handful of sweetbrier tucked away in her dress where unconsciously she had carried it all day. So it is in our own hearts that we carry that which gives odour, tone, fragrance, to our whole life.

- "In ourselves the sunshine dwells,
In ourselves the music swells;
Everywhere the heart awake
Finds what pleasure it can make;
Everywhere the light and shade
By the gazer's eye is made."

Always, too, those whose lives are the sweetest and give out the gentlest benedictions are themselves unconscious of that which is best in them. Then there are those who carry not sweetness, but unlovingness in themselves and diffuse unkindliness—not kindness. Some people think others are hard to get along with. They say they are disagreeable, unreasonable, selfish. Really, however, the unloveliness or the want of congeniality is in themselves. What we find in others

is in a large measure the reflection of the qualities of our own lives. If you have sweetbrier tucked away in your own bosom, you will detect the fragrance of sweetbrier wherever you go, even in the dreariest place, where no flower of any sort blooms. You will think that the people you are with, or are meeting, are wondrously sweet, patient, and kind. The fact is, however, that the fragrance is from your own life. It is your own kindliness of spirit that makes the atmosphere about you kindly.

Loving and Serving.

This is the secret of that fine art which some people possess of finding always only beauty and good in others. You cannot find anywhere in others what you have not in yourself the capacity to recognise and find. You must have the bird in your eye, lovers of Nature tell us, before you can see the bird in the bush. A gentle spirit finds gentleness in every life, while an ungentle spirit finds it nowhere, even in the richest nature. So we make our own Christmas. If we have Christmas in our own heart it will be Christmas wherever we go. It is the want of capacity to find the good in others that makes many people hard to live with, to get along with. We must get love into our own breasts, and then we shall no longer be exacting, arbitrary, tyrannical in our demands upon others. "Love suffereth long and is kind," says St. Paul. If only we could learn this lesson it would be Christmas all the year where we live, and we should make a Christmas atmosphere also for others to live in who dwell near us.

Christmas teaches us anew the lesson of service. The passion of our life should be to do good to all we know, to all whose lives our lives touch. The religion of Christ teaches us to love, and if we love we shall serve. In our Lord's parable of the Judgment we are shown the kind of life it is that fills up the measure of faithfulness. Those who have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, visited the sick, and have been kind to the lonely, are those who are on the King's right hand.

There is a beautiful legend of a monk who dwelt continually in his cell and prayed to be fashioned into the likeness of the Cross. He had vowed that none should see

his face until he had looked upon the face of Christ. So his devotions were constant. The children played outside the monastery and the birds sang by his cell window, but the monk heeded not the one nor the other. One morning he seemed to hear a voice which told him that that day he should see the vision of his Lord he had been waiting for so long. He became more absorbed than ever in praying and watching. There was a gentle knocking at the door of his cell by-and-by, and the voice of a little child was heard outside, pleading for shelter, food. Her feet were cold, her clothing was thin. But the monk must not be disturbed—he would soon see his Lord. Evening drew on, the tapers burned low. Why was the Master so long in appearing?

Then at last the monk was told that the promised vision had already come—Christ had come, had knocked, had waited, and had gone away unwelcomed. He had come in the form of the little child, cold and hungry, that cried by the door, and had not been admitted. The monk was expecting some bright splendour, some theophany; the Master had come rather in a human need, and had not been recognised.

Gentler Hearts.

So it is always that Christ comes to us, not in mysterious appearances, but in sorrows to be comforted, in hungry little ones to be fed, in discouraged ones to be heartened. Christmas teaches the lesson of loving service in its own spirit of ministry. It makes our hearts gentler, it stirs within us compassion for all who need the help we can give, it sends us out in the name of the Master to put a little brightness into darkened lives.

That is the service to which Christmas sends us. Christ comes to us in every human need that appeals to us, and we shall best honour and please Him that sends us if we go out quickly and do the service of love that will give help, comfort, and cheer to others.

"Open the door of your heart, my friend,
Heedless of class or creed,
When you hear the cry of a brother's voice,
The sob of a child in need,
To the shining heaven that o'er you bends
You need no map or chart
But only the love the Master gave—
Open the door of your heart."



THE CHRISTMAS BABY.

A Complete Story by Nora Tynan O'Mahony.

ROGER BARNEWALL stood up from his lonely dinner-table, pushed back his chair, gave a touch to his waistcoat, then walked to the fireplace and stifled a sound, half-yawn, half-sigh, as his gaze wandered from the hands of the clock on the mantelshelf to get lost in a long and steady abstraction in the heart of the blazing logs.

It was Christmas Eve, and he had noticed the logs before with a dim sense of gratitude to his housekeeper, who always took such care of him and saw that nothing should be wanting in that household to the due and proper celebration of the festive season. Brightly-berried holly shone on picture and chandelier, the dinner-table was decorated with shining leaves, late chrysanthemums, and early narcissi; the whole room, as well as the big house of which it was only a slender part, spelt wealth and luxury, comfort, taste, and refinement.

Roger Barnewall had dined wisely, and not too well, since he was dyspeptic; and the fact of eating one's dinner alone and in silence does not tend, perhaps, to that extraction of the gastric juices so necessary to the process of good digestion. A successful and brilliant lawyer, he had everything of comfort and of peace in his home that wealth and the untiring solicitude of his man-servant and two women-servants could bring him; and yet, as he gazed into the embers fast paling and crumbling into grey ashes and dust, he asked himself what was the good of it all, this luxurious, empty life of his, steadily growing so hopelessly dull and lonely.

It was not that he lived selfishly, for Roger Barnewall, hard-headed man of business though he was, had a very tender heart towards all humanity, as well as towards the whole creation of dumb creatures; and everyone connected with him, from his man to his cat, might be certain of having an enviably good and soft time of it. Nor did his charity end at home, for many a hard-up and suffering fellow-creature knew the depths of his goodness. A pile of letters lay ready for posting on a side-table near the door. One contained a cheque for twenty pounds, a Christmas gift to an old clerk crippled by rheumatism; another held a donation hardly less generous for an aged servant who had waited on his mother—one and all brought a message of

cheer and goodwill to some poor body in need. But fate had been singularly unkind to him in leaving him peculiarly and absolutely alone in the world. His father and mother were dead long since; he had never had a brother, and an only and dearly beloved sister, many years younger than himself, had gone against his wishes and quarrelled irrevocably with him in order to marry the man of her heart, a worthless and dissipated scamp. She had emigrated with her husband to a farm in Canada and had died there a year or so after her marriage; and her brother, who, though loving her with a more than common love, had ceased all communication with her from the day she had defied him, felt even still a hard resentment and jealousy, if not actual hate, towards the man who had robbed him of her affection and the comfort of her presence. Yet on this Christmas Eve, as many times lately, he felt a certain pain of remorse for his treatment of his dead sister and her lover. He might have helped her, have gone over, at least have written to her before her death. And now—it was too late.

Then there had been Alice—but that was twenty long years back, for Roger Barnewall, though still a handsome man with hardly a silver streak in his raven locks, was already nearing fifty—Alice, the one girl in the world for him, to whom he had given himself heart and soul. In those old days he had been a poor man; Alice's father would not hear of her marriage with the briefless young barrister, and his daughter was too dutiful and devoted a child to go against his wishes. But less than a year later, sad and broken of heart, she had fallen into a rapid decline; not the best medical advice nor all the care and wealth her father so freely lavished on her could now keep her with him, so the old man, as well as the despised and rejected suitor, was doomed to be lonely and desolate for the rest of his days. Even then, already too late, Roger Barnewall had set a firm foot on the ladder of success, and was mounting it surely, step by step; but from the day of Alice's death he had never looked at another woman, all the pent-up love of his heart had been lavished on his one sister, and she had cast him aside for a worthless—

"Shall I post your letters now, sir?" his man Davis asked, suddenly awakening his



"Shall I post your letters now, sir?"—p. 27.

master out of the brown study into which he had fallen.

"Do," Roger answered. "Or, stay, I will stroll out and post them myself."

His man brought in his hat and coat, and, lighting a cigar and bundling the pile of letters into one of the deep pockets, Roger Barnewall found himself a moment later striding quickly along in the frosty night.

A light sprinkling of snow had fallen, making the pathways wet and slippery, and rendering pedestrianism a matter of some difficulty and caution. Waggoners guided their horses carefully down the hill leading to the village, for Roger Barnewall lived some little way out of town, and his steps, too, were directed towards the village and post-office. Stars glistened frostily in the sky, and everything seemed to foretell a spell of hard, "seasonable" weather.

"God help the poor—and the little birds!" he ejaculated, as he drew the collar of his heavy frieze coat closer about his ears. A man, half-drunk and staggering, was making his way slowly down the road in front of him; in his arms, to Roger's alarm and indignation, he carried a small child—a little fair-haired baby girl of three or four years, bareheaded and ill-clad for that bitter night. The man was talking fond, half-maudlin baby-talk to the little one, who, all unconscious of her danger, prattled back to him with an innocent, childish confidence which sent a queer pang of envy, mingled with pity and anger, straight to Roger's lonely heart.

As every now and again the man gave a sudden lurch to the right or left, Roger's heart leaped up in alarm. He longed to take the little one into the safety of his own arms, but, being a bachelor and strangely shy of children, he felt reluctant to interfere. Then, as the cause of his perturbation mounted a slight ascent crossing the river-bridge, there suddenly happened what Roger feared. The man stumbled, recovered himself, then slipped and came down heavily, still clinging to the child.

With a muttered imprecation, Roger dragged the prostrate man aside and lifted in his arms the poor little mite so rudely shaken at last out of its confidence, and now crying aloud with all its might.

"How dare you risk your child's life in such a fashion, you ruffianly scoundrel?" Roger demanded, feeling angry enough to kick the fallen man into the gutter. Then he stopped, seeing that blood was flowing profusely from the other's head; he was breathing heavily,

stertorously. It was plain that he must be seriously hurt.

Two or three people gathered, and one man with a bicycle offered to go for a policeman. Meanwhile the little one, yet more frightened by her father's silence, clung nervously to Roger, weeping as though her heart would break.

"There, there, poor little soul! I will take care of you," Roger found himself whispering in the child's ear. Her thin, bare arms and hands were pitifully cold; a pair of well-worn house-shoes were on her feet, whilst a faded rag of a dress and a couple of threadbare petticoats were all that stood between her tender body and the biting cold blast.

"God help the poor!" Roger said again, with the same mingling of pity and indignation in his breast as he looked down at the unconscious man at his feet. He was evidently a stranger to the neighbourhood, a dark bearded man with some traces of good looks, which poverty and dissipation had not entirely removed—some poor, weak-natured beggar fallen on hard times and "gone under," Roger thought more tolerantly, remembering his loving talk to the child.

A couple of constables arrived, carrying with them a stretcher.

"A bad case enough, and it's well if he ever gets over it," one of them said, as they lifted the unconscious stranger from the ground. Where his head had rested beside the kerbstone, lay a large pool of blood, already half-congealed.

"What's to be done with the kid?" the man asked, as Roger turned the child's face away from that ugly sight. One soft, cold little hand lay in his; some queer, unsuspected instinct of tenderness had prompted him to open his great-coat and fold the tiny, shivering body against his own warm heart.

One of the constables ran his hands hastily through the stranger's pockets, and drew forth three halfpennies, a broken pen-knife, and a small piece of lead-pencil. That was all; there was nothing to show who the man was, or to where he belonged.

"I suppose we must take her to the station till we find out who she is," the constable debated, with a questioning look at the child. "What's your name, my girl?" he went on, addressing the little one in kindly tones.

"Pamela," she lisped.

"Sounds outlandish, don't it? Pamela what, tell me?"

"Pamela. Dat's all. Daddie calls me 'Pam' for short."

"Well, where do you live, Pam?"

"I lives with mine daddy." No further answer could they get.

Roger's heart went out with a new tenderness towards her, Pamela! It had been his dead sister's name.

"I think—I think I should like to take charge of her, for to-night at least," he stammered, moved by a strange impulse to bring this forlorn little waif, without further delay,

"All right, all right, sir. Most kind-hearted of you, sir, I'm sure," the constable had said, with a wondering look, touching his helmet respectfully as he and his companion marched off with their limp and heavy burden. A very few minutes later Roger had deposited his small charge on the hearth-rug before his own dining-room fire, where the little creature, soon forgetting her sorrow, laughed



"A bad case enough, and it's well if he ever gets over it"—p. 29.

into the warmth and comfort of his own fireside, to feed her up with milk and cakes and sweets and everything that a little girl liked, to play the good Santa Claus, and to make one lost little child and his own lonely heart as happy as might be for this one Christmas. Davis would stare, to be sure, and he was not certain that his staid housekeeper would be altogether pleased with such an unconventional visitor. But Mary—yes, Mary, the soft, good-natured Irish housemaid, she would be the one to take charge of the child, he thought gratefully.

and prattled merrily as she held out her hands to the cheering blaze.

"Bless her little heart, but she don't seem a bit strange," Mrs. Walters said cheerfully, much to her master's relief, as she came in and looked at the visitor. "I'll be bound you're hungry as well as cold, my poor little one," she went on in motherly tones, "and I'd best see about getting you something to eat. But you want your face washed badly; ay, and your hands too. I'll send Mary to take her, sir," she added, as she bustled off.

Mary had little trouble in coaxing the

child upstairs to the bathroom, where, in open-mouthed wonder and admiration of the shining pipes and beautiful tiled walls and floors, the little one passively permitted the maid to wash her face and hands and brush her crop of shining golden curls.

"That's better," the master of the house said as Mary brought down her charge again, and set her on the hearth-rug for his inspection. But his eyes answered a questioning look in the maid's own as they fixed themselves with a disapproving glance on the child's ragged garments.

"How on earth are we going to dress her?" he asked, with a sudden sense of his own masculine ineptitude. There was certainly nothing to fit this small person in the whole of that big house. And to-morrow would be Christmas Day!

"I could run out myself, sir, and get her a few things," Mary ventured tentatively. "Being Christmas Eve, the shops will be open for a long time yet."

"The very thing," he answered, with relief. "I'm glad you thought of it. Get her a complete rig-out. You'll know what a little girl wants; and, I say," as the housemaid went off, carrying a handful of gold coins, "be sure to buy her some toys, and a doll, the biggest and prettiest doll you can get in the village."

Mary hurried off, well pleased with her commission, and Roger sat down in a low arm-chair, and took the child on his knee.

"Where does your maminie live, dear?" he asked, seeking again to ascertain the child's identity, as the little hand crept confidently into his own.

"In Hebben," she lisped. "God tooked her, and left nobody but daddy and me. And then daddy got lonely in America and we comed home, but daddy's money got all spendid, and that made him queer and cross sometimes; but he's a very good, kind daddy." she affirmed stoutly, with something like a challenge in her shining blue eyes as she regarded her benefactor with a sidelong glance.

"I'm sure he is, my pet," the man said softly. "And when do you go to sleep, Pamela?" She had eaten a hearty meal of bread and milk, followed by a thick slice of Christmas cake. Her little eyes were already drowsing in the warmth of the fire.

"I goes when daddy goes, but sometimes I goes to bye-bye on his lap."

"You dear rogue," Roger said, hugging the child closer as the little head with its silken yellow curls drooped wearily against his breast. Long before Mary returned, bring-

ing with her a plentiful supply of small frocks and pinafores, nightdresses and petticoats, shoes and stockings, and a great wax doll that obligingly went to sleep whenever you laid it flat, Pamela had herself "gone to bye-bye" with her soft little cheek laid close to Roger's heart; and as he looked down at the rounded outline of the baby's face, and listened to her soft, regular breathing, he experienced such a strange, tender, wistful kind of happiness as he had never known before.

A loud knock at the front door startled him out of his reverie.

"It's a constable as wishes to see you, sir," Davis said. "Shall I show him in here, sir?"

Roger had risen with a sudden feeling of shyness, still holding the child in his arms.

"Take her, Mary, and put her to bed," he said to the waiting maid, as he carefully transferred his charge to her arms. "And see that she wants for nothing, like a good girl."

The constable was shown in.

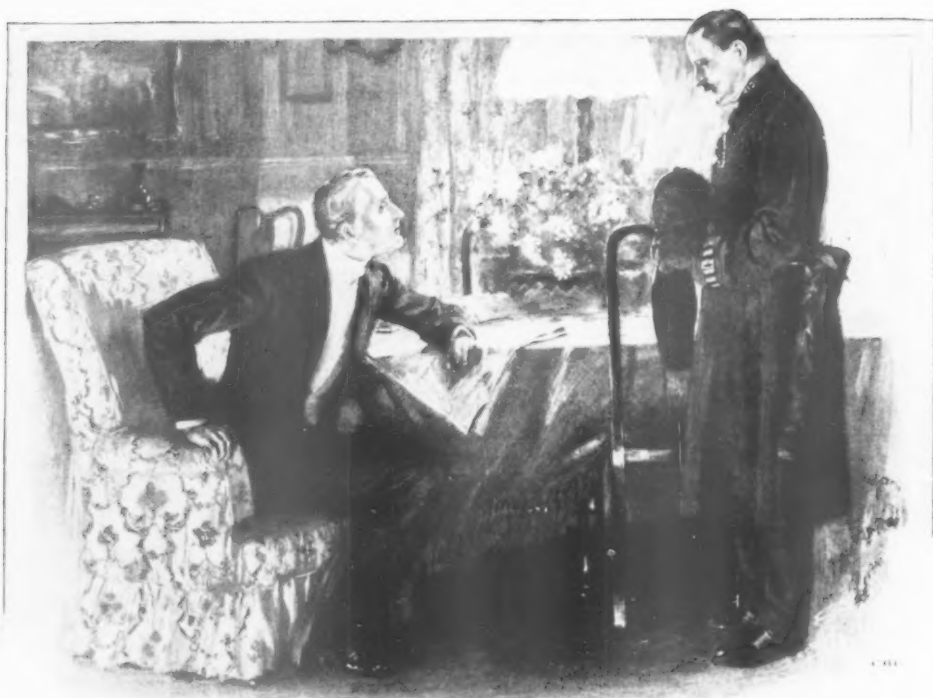
"Beg pardon for troubling you so late, Mr. Barnewall," he said. "It's this chap as got hurt this evening, sir. The doctor ordered him to hospital, and he's mortal bad, not likely to last till morning. A little the worse of liquor he seems, too, but as well as we could make out, sir—he got his senses only for a few moments—he says as how he knows you, sir, and was looking for your house—something about asking you to do for the child, Mr. Barnewall," with an apologetic glance. "I don't know if it's right, sir. He says his name is Bertram Perry—or, maybe, it was Bertrand Perry."

Roger started. "Bertram Perry!" he cried. "Did he say that was his name? Is the child his own?"

"So it seems, sir," the constable said.

"Heavens, his child, my own sister's child!" Roger said, with no attempt to hide his emotion. "I never heard, never dreamt, that a child of hers existed." He felt stunned. How bitterly he blamed himself now, that in his stubborn pride and jealous anger he had so utterly ignored this man, his sister's husband, even in the midst of his great trouble. He had not recognised him at the time of the encounter, but the beard and moustache—in the old days Bertram Perry had been clean-shaven and boyish—made a wonderful difference. Yet he might have known that head, with its crisp curls, the clearly-cut forehead and weak, handsome face.

"I suppose you've no message, sir," the



"Did he say that was his name?"—p. 31.

constable said, fingering his helmet and preparing to leave.

"Yes—stay, I'll come with you," Roger answered. And when, a couple of hours later, Bertram Perry opened his dying eyes for a last look on the world, it was to meet those of Roger Barnewall resting on his face with a pitiful and forgiving gaze.

"It's all right, old fellow, I'll stand by you and the little one: I'll take good care of her," Roger told him huskily, and the other, after one look—the long, long look of a dying man—closed his eyes wearily, but with a little sigh of satisfaction.

A short time later, when all was over, and Roger had quietly arranged every detail of the dead man's funeral, he returned to his

home, knelt down by the side of the baby's bed, and prayed as he had not prayed for years. His heart was full of a new happiness, tinged though it was with many a regret. Gratefully and humbly he prayed in that solemn hour, while the Christmas bells rang out across the snow, for grace and health and strength to fulfil fittingly the dear and sacred charge that was entrusted to him.

"Pamela, my own little Pamela," he whispered, as the child stirred, and he lifted the little dimpled fist out-thrust towards him to his lips and held it there, "how little I thought when I brought you home with me to-night that I was about to entertain an angel, such a dear and welcome angel, unawares."



THE ROAD FROM JERUSALEM TO BETHLEHEM.

CHRISTMAS



By F. de Haenen.

SHINING brightly through the crystal-clear atmosphere of the Oriental night, the strange new star beckoned to the Magi



THE SHEPHERDS' GROTTA



THE WELL OF THE MAGI.

on that momentous evening, over nineteen centuries ago, when, having left Jerusalem in a state of turmoil at their wondrous tidings, the three men departed by the western gate, and turning southwards, took the road leading to Bethlehem. As they pressed onwards, "lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. . . . And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him." Then, having opened their treasures and presented gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, the Wise Men of the East departed into their own country.



THE ENTRANCE TO THE BASILICA.

For centuries Christian pilgrims have followed the same road, their minds filled with the same desire—to worship the Son of God in the place of His Nativity. No other part of Palestine is so rich in Biblical associations, in sacred traditions; nowhere else does the pious pilgrim feel his heart so strangely uplifted. Here, indeed, one treads on holy ground.

The traveller leaves Jerusalem by the Jaffa gate, on his left the frowning fortress capped by the Tower of David, and, if mounted, reaches his destination in about an hour, the distance as the crow flies being only some six miles. About half-way, by the side of the path, lies the Well of the Magi, where the Wise Men are said to have stopped to water their camels. Here, says tradition, they caught sight of the star again, and "rejoiced with exceeding great joy." On approaching Bethlehem the country gradually loses its arid character, until suddenly, at a turning in the road, the holy town comes into view, its white walls rising from the midst of terraced olive groves, vineyards,



INTERIOR OF THE BASILICA AND ENTRANCE TO THE GROTTA OF THE NATIVITY.

and apricot orchards. Unlike the majority of towns in Palestine, Bethlehem contains practically none but Christian inhabitants. The people are the descendants of Crusaders, and though surrounded by Semitic races, have preserved the Aryan type to a remarkable degree. Blue eyes and fair hair are not uncommon among them. The men are distinguished for their industry and enterprise, and the women for their remarkable beauty, their noble carriage, and the purity of their lives. The women wear a costume which is strikingly picturesque, with a peculiar head-dress made of cloth adorned with rows of silver coins.

The Church of the Nativity, officially known as the Church of St. Mary, was



THE WELL IN WHICH LEGENDS SAY THE STAR FELL
AFTER THE NATIVITY.

erected by the Emperor Constantine in the year 330, and can claim to be the oldest example of Christian architecture in the world. It marks the birth-place of our Saviour, and happily no other Biblical site in Palestine is so little open to criticism on the score of authenticity. It was already known in the second century, and is, indeed, the only place mentioned in history before the time of Constantine. There is no doubt either that the

church is the original edifice. Other shrines have been destroyed again and again; this one alone has defied the combined attacks of mankind and of time. The superstitious have sought to account for its preservation by investing its stones with some miraculous power, and one ancient chronicler gravely



INTERIOR OF THE GROTTA OF THE NATIVITY.



states that of olden time an Egyptian sultan, desiring to use the stones to build himself a palace at Cairo, gave orders to destroy the sacred building. When the men approached to carry out the sacrilegious behest, "out of the solid wall came forth a serpent of wondrous size, who bent his head back against the wall and gave a bite to the first marble slab and split it with his fiery tongue." The sultan decamped in most un-Oriental haste, abandoned his design, and sought his building material

THE MIDNIGHT PROCESSION DESCENDING INTO THE GROTTO

elsewhere. The tracks of the serpent, continues our veracious historian, were plainly to be seen in his day, and he had "beheld the traces of this miracle with great pleasure, and often looked curiously upon them with inward wonderment."

It must be confessed



THE PATRIARCH WITH THE

EFFIGY OF THE INFANT CHRIST.

that the first view of the great Basilica is disappointing, and, indeed, from the outside it is difficult to recognise it as a church at all. The only entrance is by a small door, which has been built up to such an extent that one has almost to crawl through—a reminiscence of the

troubled times when the church had to be made secure against Moslem aggression. Through the "Needle's Eye," as the door is termed, one enters the porch, a dark, low-roofed apartment from which a single door leads into the church. One is at once struck by the simple grandeur of the



ADORATION OF THE EFFIGY OF THE INFANT CHRIST.

interior, though the view is obstructed by a wall, erected by the Greeks sixty years ago, which hides the transept and the apse.

The whole length of the church has to be traversed to reach the stairs leading to the crypt, where is the Holy of Holies, the Chapel of the Nativity. There are two staircases, one for the Latins and one for the other sects. The approach to the Latin doorway passes near an Armenian altar, in front of which is a carpet, which has proved a fertile source of friction. On one occasion, not so many years ago, the carpet moved mysteriously, night after night, further and further from the Armenian



THE VIRGIN'S WELL.

altar, until the Franciscans had to make a detour to reach their door. The latter finally armed themselves with scissors, and cut the carpet until it was reduced to its proper limits. A free fight ensued, which was only prevented from leading to bloodshed by the timely arrival of the Turkish guards. Since that day the carpet is watched attentively, and it encroaches but by a hair's breadth on the Latin thoroughfare, trouble is sure to follow.

The Cave of the Nativity is a natural grotto worn in the limestone but covered in by an artificial vault and lined with marble throughout. At first one is inclined to be surprised at finding

a cave where one expected a stable, but according to the best authorities the numerous grottoes in this part of Palestine were formerly used for housing the cattle, and Major C. R. Conder, the leader of the Palestine Exploring Expedition, unhesitatingly affirms that "the rude grotto with its rocky manger may, it seems to me, be accepted even by the most sceptical of modern explorers."

Here, then, according to both ancient tradition and modern scientific research, is the actual place where our Lord was born, when Mary "wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger." With feelings of reverence deeper than those aroused by any other scene in the Holy Land, the pilgrim descends the steps cut in the rock, and emerges in the Cave of the Nativity. On the right stand a couple of Turkish soldiers, with the butts of their rifles resting on the ground; to the left is a recess with an altar, under which is a silver star let into the pavement. This is the hallowed spot, as the inscription testifies: "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est*" ("Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary").

The recess is hung with lamps, fifteen in number, of which six belong to the Greeks, five to the Armenians, and four to the Latins, and innumerable lamps are suspended from the gilded roof of the cave, while the marble walls are covered with hangings of stamped leather. To the right of the recess three steps lead down to the Chapel of the Manger, the stable where, according to the legend, the Virgin Mother carried her Babe and let the cattle warm Him with their gentle breath. At the other end of the grotto is a round hole, out of which water for the use of the Holy Family is said miraculously to have burst forth. It is now called the Well of the Star, for a local tradition has it that the star which guided the Wise Men of the East here fell to earth, and made a well, at the bottom of which the star may be seen to this day, though the sight is vouchsafed to none but virgins. There are many other caves under the church, one of which is the Chapel of St. Jerome, where he lived and wrote his works, another containing his tomb. The Armenians do not own any part of the crypt, the Cave of the Nativity belonging to the Greeks and the Chapel of the Manger to the Latins. It is a lamentable fact that here, on the very spot where Christ came into the world to preach peace upon earth

and good will towards men, one is perpetually reminded of the petty jealousies, the puerile bickerings, the trivial disputes for precedence between the rival sects of Christians, who are only kept from flying at each other's throats by soldiers of an alien creed.

At Christmastide, when Christians the wide world over turn their thoughts to Bethlehem, pilgrims come from all parts of the Holy Land for the great festival in the Church of the Nativity. On Christmas Eve the French Consul goes from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to take part in the ceremony, accompanied by his eight mounted *cavass*, a detachment of Turkish cavalry, and the superiors of the various religious foundations. The service begins at ten o'clock in the evening with a pontifical mass celebrated in the adjoining Franciscan church, and at midnight a long procession sets out for the Cave of the Nativity. In front is borne the cross, followed by monks carrying lighted candles, the Patriarch, and immediately behind him the French Consul and his attendants. The Patriarch bears in his arms a waxen effigy of the infant Jesus, reposing on silken cushions with a bed of straw beneath. On reaching the recess of the Nativity, the Patriarch hands the image to a deacon, and begins to intone the Gospel according to St. Luke: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus." At the verse ending "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered," he takes back the effigy, and, laying it upon the silver star, he continues, modifying the sacred text to suit the occasion. "And *here* she brought forth her firstborn son." Then, after drawing fine lace-work over the image: "And *here* wrapped Him in swaddling clothes." Finally he carries it into the adjoining Chapel of the Manger, and ends by repeating the words: "And *here* laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." The chants are continued until two o'clock in the morning, ending in a *Te Deum*, while all Bethlehem watches throughout the night, crowding the immense Basilica and singing songs of joy.

An object of particular veneration to the Bethlehemites is the Milk Grotto, or Women's Cavern, a few minutes' walk from the Basilica, where, according to the legend, the Holy Family sought shelter during the Massacre of the Innocents.

A short walk from here is a subterranean chapel called the Grotto of the

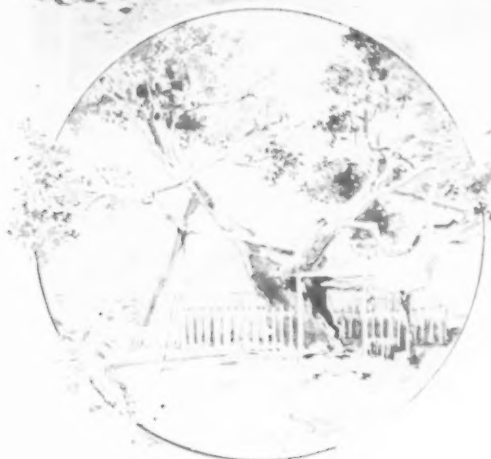
Shepherds, where the angel of the Lord is said to have appeared to the shepherds.

A pretty legend relates to the principal cistern of the place. One day the Virgin was passing by and was athirst. A man was drawing water, and she asked him to give her some, but he refused roughly, telling her to help herself. She approached the well, and as she did so the water rose to the very edge, and she was able to drink without trouble, after which the water fell to its accustomed

A BETHLEHEM MAIDEN



THE MILK GROTTA



THE TREE OF MATARIEH

level. The place goes by the name of the Virgin's Well.

Southwards from Bethlehem runs the road followed by the Holy Family on the flight into Egypt, and places associated with them are pointed out to the wayfarer all the way to Cairo, not far from which town, and near the Copt village, is the famous tree of Matarieh, under whose shade the Holy Family is said to have rested.

ONE CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON.

A Complete Story by S. Macnaughtan, Author of "The Expensive Miss Du Cane," Etc.

THE social world at Torpington had long ago decided that Mr. Eustace Lennard, Lieutenant in his Majesty's 114th Regiment of Foot, had behaved not only badly but unwisely when he broke off his engagement with Miss Angela Goldney, an heiress worth several thousands a year, and married a penniless officer's daughter, with fair hair and blue eyes and not sixpence in the world.

Torpington is a considerable town in the North of England, from which good hunting may be obtained, and Mr. Lennard had been staying with friends in the neighbourhood when he met Miss Goldney and presumably fell in love with her; for within the next six months—mutual friends furthering and aiding the affair in the most obliging manner—they were engaged to be married to each other. Mr. Lennard was considered the luckiest man within a radius of a great many miles, for Miss Goldney was as charming as she was beautiful, and as beautiful as she was rich. Consequently the future promised well for Mr. Lennard, who had only such qualities to recommend him as a handsome face, a capital seat on a horse, and the reputation of being a good fellow. And these things, it is admitted on all sides, but perhaps in a commercial centre like Torpington it is almost unnecessarily insisted upon, are of no market value whatever.

Mr. Lennard had the further distinction of being the brother of Colonel Lennard, one of the most distinguished soldiers of the day; but as both his brother and he were as poor as it is possible for two English officers to be, it was felt that even a connection with the hero of a recent frontier campaign had something unsubstantial in it. What was the good of fame, argued the stout burgesses and commercial men of Torpington, if it brought you nothing in return? And there is no doubt that they and their wives and their families felt that a slight, almost amounting to an insult, had been paid to the town when Miss Goldney, with her many thousands a year and her father's charming place to which she would one day succeed, had been thrown over in favour of a golden-haired baby of eighteen who had never signed a cheque in her life.

Of Miss Goldney's own feelings on the subject, of course, no one knew anything

at all. She drove into Torpington in her big, luxurious carriage as before, and paid calls upon her friends, and sent out invitations in her mother's name to dinner parties and shooting parties at their big house seven miles out in the country. She dispensed her doles and her charities in the town with her usual munificence, and she continued to gain a great deal of love in a certain poor quarter of Torpington, which was her district.

Her romantic and admiring girl friends had decided that Angela was heart-broken and would never marry after her disappointment of five years ago. And now they heard with real feelings of apprehension, and a generous display of sympathy and concern, that the 114th Regiment was immediately to be quartered at Torpington and that Captain and Mrs. Lennard would consequently be inmates of the town. People wondered how Miss Goldney would "take it," and no one was altogether surprised, but believed that she was acting with her usual perfect good taste, when she and her father and mother went abroad, just before the regiment came to the gaunt grey barracks—although, as a matter of fact, the visit to the Riviera was taken entirely on account of Mrs. Goldney's health.

A certain feeling of loyalty to the departed heroine caused the good folk of Torpington to give a very cold welcome to Captain Lennard and his delicate wife; and the fact that they took inferior lodgings in the town, and merely brought one Irish servant with them as nurse, no doubt helped to convince a commercial society that the young soldier and Mrs. Lennard were people not worth knowing.

Be that as it may, Mrs. Lennard's first year at Torpington was not a pleasant one; her health, never very good, was sadly tried by the cold winds of the bleak northern town, and when a delicate baby was born it seemed as if it were impossible for her to regain her strength. She came down to the sitting-room of the lodgings one day and lay on an uneasy sofa by the fire, but the next day she was in bed again; and this afternoon Eustace Lennard, who was keeping watch by her bedside while the Irish nurse looked after a sturdy boy of four and the baby, was trying to persuade his wife to have her sick nurse back again.

"We can't afford it, Eustace, we really can't," said his wife feverishly. "It was awful having to leave Burford with so many bills unpaid, and we cannot begin the same sort of thing here."

"Walter's cheque enabled us to pay most things," protested her husband, who, from having had a number of bills hanging round his neck all his life, perhaps regarded them more stoically than did his wife.

"We should never have got away if Walter hadn't helped us," said the feeble voice from the bed. "I wish I was not so delicate, Eustace; I am no use to you, and my illnesses seem to use up every penny of our money."

Eustace loyally protested, but there was no overruling the fact that a delicate wife was a thing which he, as a penniless soldier, was ill able to afford. His brother had helped him generously from time to time, but Eustace did not require to be told that even a small cheque from such a quarter could only be sent at considerable self-sacrifice on the part of the giver.

"We must get into new lodgings anyway, as soon as you are stronger," went on Captain Lennard. "The landlady here never has the same servant for two weeks together, and the food is uneatable."

"The food is pretty bad," admitted the plaintive voice, "and they do seem to hate waiting on the nursery."

"I wish we could have a little house of our own!" said Captain Lennard, but his wife placed her hands upon his lips.

"Don't talk of it," she said; "that time we had a house was the most expensive since we married, and it has crippled us ever since. If only we could keep the bills down now and get straight again, we ought to be able to manage."

"Meanwhile," he said fiercely, "you are not getting a decent thing to eat, and you are losing your health, and all because I was such a selfish brute as to ask you to marry me!"

"All because I'm so stupid that I never seem to be very well!" amended his wife.

"You'd be better if I could give you decent comforts," he argued; "but we have knocked about from one uncomfortable place to another ever since we were married, and the end of it will be I'll have to get an exchange of India and try to send you home some money."

The tears were flowing down his wife's thin cheeks. "Don't speak of it this afternoon," she said, "I can't bear it."

"I believe Walter would pay for a nurse if he knew," said Captain Lennard. He was

feeling pretty hopeless that afternoon, poor fellow. The expenses connected with children seemed incalculable; the money spent on a move, even without furniture, entailed settling up bills and expensive journeys. And, economise as he might over his own expenses, a certain number of clothes had to be bought and various sums in connection with his regiment had to be paid.

"There is one thing I want you to promise me," said Mrs. Lennard, "and that is, not to write to your brother again for money. I don't even know him; I have never seen him, and yet he has been extraordinarily good to me. And now that he has got his K.C.B. and is coming home as a hero, he will want every penny he has for going about and doing things which people will expect him to do. Do let me try and do without a nurse for the present! Norah is wonderfully clever at doing things for me, and she is a perfect genius with baby. And you know how troublesome nurse was; she seemed to expect all sorts of things which we don't even have ourselves."

"I wonder when Walter is actually coming home," Captain Lennard went on. He had been losing heart lately and losing spirit too, and it may have crossed his mind (desperately ashamed as he was of the thought), that were his distinguished brother to come home and find him and his wife and children in these poor lodgings, he might insist upon giving him one of those cheques which were so badly needed, but which he felt he could not ask for. He gave his wife the promise which she required, with the unspoken hope that his brother might be at home soon. And the tired little woman closed her eyes presently and said she thought she might sleep until it was time to take her medicine.

Eustace looked at the bottle and found that it was empty, and was going out to get it filled, when he met his family at the door of their lodgings with their Irish attendant.

"Give me the bottle," said Norah, in her imperative way, "and mind the children till I come back. The baby is sleepin' a trate, and you can just wheel her in the pram into the dining-room and not disturb her at all till I come back. There isn't a taste of washing come back this week, and I was just wondering how I was to retrace it when I saw yer honour."

Eustace lifted the perambulator up the steps of the house and wheeled it into the dining-room, which was on the ground floor, and then he unbuttoned his small son's coat and crept up to the nursery for his shoes.

Roger was a high-spirited lad and refused with emphasis to be left alone, or to remain quiet unless he was taken upstairs on his father's shoulder. He had a shrewd suspicion that the peace of the afternoon depended on his good behaviour, and that was sufficient provocation for him! He began to ask for all those things which by the laws of the nursery he was forbidden to have; and his father, in some fear of what Norah would say if there were any disturbance, and out of consideration for the sleeper upstairs, weakly gave him everything he demanded. His Field Service cap adorned the boy's head, and his cane was freely brandished in the air. An umbrella was fetched from the hall, and did exquisite damage amongst the mantel-piece ornaments, besides threatening the total destruction of the eyesight of both father and son. A workbox, which Roger understood perfectly was forbidden property and sacred to his mother's hands only, he now insisted upon having, and he rolled the contents about the floor and revelled in the disgorgement of reels and tapes and pincushions.

Master Roger, having found that even forbidden fruit may lose its flavour if it is freely offered instead of being nefariously acquired, was now bent on further conquests. He wrapped himself in the coarse lace curtains of doubtful cleanliness that hung in the window, and he breathed heavily upon the window-pane, and then endeavoured to trace a pattern with his tongue on the befogged glass. From this amusement he was rescued by his father, who put on stern airs and called him "Sir!" But Roger was master of the situation this afternoon, and he knew it. He claimed two foxes' brushes, filled with dust and moth, as his playthings, and soon covered himself and his pinafore with a liberal coating of dirt. Armed with these weapons, he attacked the wheel of his sister's perambulator, which he decided was a horse in need of the whip, until, disturbed by this treatment of her sleeping-place, Captain Lennard's daughter awoke and yelled lustily. Her father lifted her from the perambulator and consoled her as best he could, pressing the queer long bundle of clothes against his shabby serge jacket with its brass buttons, and mingling his entreaties to her to "Hush now!" with a severe lecture which he delivered to his son across the baby's recumbent form.

Captain Lennard believed that there was a strange black object fastened to an ivory ring which was generally considered consolatory to the infant mind, and having jangled every metal article in the room in his baby's face, in order

to distract her from her own woes, he went upstairs in order to fetch the object which he had heard mendaciously named a "feeder." Miss Lennard began to wail afresh when she was just outside her mother's room, and, driven to extremities, Captain Lennard adroitly placed the extreme ends of her clothing across her face and held them there until he was past the door, and hoped guiltily that no one would ever tell Norah what he had done.

When he returned to the dining-room, Roger was rather cleverly plastering the chairs and table with a pot of vaseline which he had found.

Outside in the slush and snow, some Christmas waits were singing, and it became a problem to know whether to risk a cold to the baby by going out and telling them to stop, or to risk his wife's slumbers being disturbed by letting them go on. Captain Lennard compromised by going to the window and making faces at the waits, whom he endeavoured by pantomimic gestures to make move onwards. The Waits were singing "Auld Lang Syne," and replied to the gestures from the window by holding out their hands for coin. Roger embarrassed the situation by making a feint of opening the window and giving evidence that he had money to bestow, and Captain Lennard looked longingly down the street, and wondered how far away the laundress lived and when Norah would be back.

It began to darken, although it was barely four o'clock in the afternoon, and the lamp-lighter came round with the long pole with which, as with a fairy-wand, he kindled by a touch the flame of gas light in each lamp as he walked rapidly down the street. Roger was charmed with this performance, and the mystery and wonder of it kept him quiet for a time. The baby ceased its crying, and lay staring with big, round eyes at its father, who feared another demonstration from the small bully if he should dare to lay her in her perambulator again.

Captain Lennard stirred the fire gently, talking soothingly to the baby all the while lest she should resent the fact that he had diverted his attention from her even for a moment, and then, seeing the ominous puckering of the little face, he gathered her to him again and walked up and down between the window and the door. On the opposite side of the street there was a long line of soot-blackened wall, beyond and beneath which ran the railway. Engines whistled shrilly from time to time, and shook audaciously the ill-built little house as they passed beneath it, while huge white puffs of smoke, twisting

themselves into fantastic shapes and then dying away against the sky, appeared ever and anon over the grimy wall at the other side of the road. Roger, on Sunday afternoons, or when he was a particularly good little boy, used to call the white wreaths of smoke his pretty angels, and make his mother's heart ache for fear of losing him; but this afternoon he had found some quaint humour in the silver steam-clouds, which he followed heavenward with a dangerous inclination to squint as he gazed upon them.

"There's another funny cloud, and another funny cloud," he reiterated at intervals, "and another funny cloud, and another funny cloud," and having repeated this statement without intermission for some time, its familiarity wrought in him a sense of humour, and he began to laugh hilariously as he squinted upwards.

The baby fixed her eyes more sternly upon her father, as though showing her disapproval of conduct which she was unable verbally to condemn.

"Don't giggle like that, Roger," said his father, taking sides in the most cowardly way with the person of whom he stood most in awe.

"Giggle, giggle, giggle-oggy," said Roger, who knew he was being as naughty as a little boy could be, but who was doubtless working up for a row, such as would break the monotony of this dull afternoon.

"Hold your tongue, sir," said his father, and the boy repeated "giggle-oggy" until an alarming fit of hiccoughs began.

Captain Lennard rang the bell for some cold water to be brought—to ring the bell in the lodgings was an act of faith on the part of the lodger. The landlady had always just run round the corner to post a letter, and the single servant was always upstairs changing her dress and had heard nothing. Captain Lennard stole upstairs in his stocking-soles, and fetched his son some water which tasted of tooth-powder; he further admonished him by saying severely that he was not going to stand any more nonsense, and Roger threw back his head and howled dismally.

Fortunately Miss Lennard began composing herself to sleep, an act of mercy on her part for which her father was profoundly grateful. Perhaps the most poignant dread of the afternoon's watching had been that she might "want her bottle," and what on earth to put in that strange receptacle and how to administer it had been weighing heavily upon the young man's heart.

He "made it up" with Roger, whom he begged to be reasonable, and not to insist on his being a bear under the dining-room table while he held his small sister in his arms. Roger said he was afraid of bogeys because it was getting dark, and Captain Lennard rang for the lamp, but no lamp came.

"Selfish soul!" he muttered. All landladies were selfish souls, and Norah, with all her merits, was a fool to have left him so long this afternoon; and what would he do suppose his wife tapped on the floor for him, as she had promised to do if she should wake and want him? That was the very minute, he knew, when Miss Lennard would awake and begin to cry again! He began to think of the other fellows in the regiment, who rode to hounds and stayed in country houses, and went to dances, and to contrast himself with them. He felt himself very old beside them, and, although nothing really mattered if Lena and the children were well and happy, still the nightmare of poverty had almost a terrifying hold upon him this afternoon as he looked down the long vista of years, and began to add up what education would cost, and to wonder whether his wife would ever be strong while she had to live a life of so much discomfort.

"I believe I'll throw up the whole thing," he said miserably, not knowing quite what the words meant or what he intended them to mean, but feeling only a weight round his neck and a longing for any possible escape from care. Perhaps he might sell out and go abroad to some place where he would not have to keep up appearances or live in cheap lodgings; but he had no capital to start anywhere, and no one wanted as a subordinate a man with a wife and two children.

Neither he nor Lena had a rich relation in the world, no one was ever likely to leave them any money, and they would always have to economise until the very end of their lives. He hugged the baby closer to him, and wondered if he were being a disloyal brute to her and Roger and his wife by railing at his lot in this way. He thought of the invalid girl upstairs, and reflected miserably that he could not even have a good doctor to attend her. If she had made a better match, what happiness her little nursery would have been to her! What excellent nurses she would have had for the children; what a capital maid to attend upon herself! Well, it could not be helped now, but he wondered if he had any right to ask even the most dearly loved girl in all the world to muddle along with him on small means all her life.



"How do you do, Eustace? I think this must be your small son who opened the door to me"—p. 40.

Roger, meanwhile, had begun to play a tune upon the window pane and to hum a dreary little song to his own accompaniment. This began to get on his father's nerves, and he begged his son several times to stop, without the least effect.

"I can't stand much more of this," said Captain Lennard, losing patience, and he crossed the room to move the boy from his place at the window pane.

"There's a carriage at the door," said Roger, "and that footman man has rung four, ten, twenty million times."

"Say 'Not at home,'" said Captain Lennard frantically, and at the very same moment he heard his wife's tap on the floor upstairs, and, punctual to the instant, the baby uplifted her voice and began to cry.

Following on this, Roger, who had opened the hall door with a good deal of importance, ushered a lady into the dining-room. She was a tall woman, beautifully dressed in velvet and furs, and with a hat trimmed with black ostrich feathers, which gently shaded her face. She came in holding Roger by the hand, and held out the other, in its pretty grey glove, to Captain Lennard, and said with a smile:

"How do you do, Eustace? I think this must be your small son who opened the door to me."

"Is it Angela?" said Captain Lennard. He found himself unable to say anything more, and began ruffling up his hair.

Then his wife knocked overhead again, and he held out his arms and just said: "Do take the baby, Angela. Lena is ill and wants me, and there isn't a soul in the house, and we are all so miserable."

So Angela Goldney held out both her arms for the child, and suddenly Captain Lennard wanted to kneel at her feet and say "Forgive me." He didn't quite know for what, but she looked so splendid and so beautiful, standing there in the little dining-room with the baby in its long clothes in her arms! He bolted upstairs instead, and made tea for his wife on a little stove and stirred up her fire.

And meanwhile Miss Goldney and the children sat below. Roger became good at once, and sat on a little stool by her side and stroked the soft velvet of her dress; and Miss Lennard went to sleep with her toes turned to the fire and a smile of pure contentment upon her face. Then Miss Goldney began to tell stories to the little boy in the fire-light until there was another ring at the door bell, and, as no one answered it, a tall man, who

had stood for some minutes on the doorstep, opened the door and walked in. He crossed the little oilcloth passage, and because the dining-room door was the first on his line of march he knocked at that and entered. He was a very tall and distinguished-looking person, with a keen, soldierly face and blue eyes, and he looked so like his brother that Miss Goldney thought for a moment that it was Eustace, and turned to him and smiled before she saw that it was an older man.

This is what Sir Walter Lennard saw on his return from India: a beautiful woman dressed in dark velvet, with soft lace about it, in which was pinned a great bunch of Parma violets; a baby on her knee, its little pink feet turned to a glowing fire, and a boy with golden curls nestling by her side.

The kindly firelight had wiped out all the ugliness of the common room, and perhaps Miss Goldney's beauty had helped to shed over it a certain radiance. Sir Walter stopped short in sheer amazement at the door of the room. It was all so utterly different from what he had expected. He had heard of his brother being hard up and of his wife being delicate and ill, and he knew that they were both very poor. But here was a radiant creature, exquisitely dressed, who sat in the firelight with her baby on her knee; and as he stood there this radiant and beautiful creature turned and smiled at him as if she had known him all her life, or almost as a wife smiles in welcome to her husband when he returns home at the quiet time of the day.

"I think you must be my sister-in-law," said Sir Walter.

"I thought for a moment you were Eustace," said Miss Goldney.

Then they laughed and explained things to each other, and Sir Walter said he had only just returned from India, and Miss Goldney said she had but yesterday got back from the Riviera; and while they were still talking, and the Indian hero was beginning to think that nothing in a man's life could be more beautiful or more blessed than a home and wife and children, Norah—voluble and full of excuses—returned. Not a bit of washing had been ready, and she had to stay and do a bit of ironing herself before she could get as much as a clean dress for the baby, and the chemist had tried to charge 4s. 6d. this time instead of 4s., but never a sixpence did he get from her! And the poor mistress—was she better? and how had the childer—bless their hearts!—behaved?

She was half-way through her long speech before she saw who was in the room, and when

she knew it was Captain Lennard's brother, who had returned from India, Norah, who had no pride and no conscience whatever where her beloved mistress was concerned, and who would gladly have taken a shilling from a shoe-black to get her anything she required, told then and there the story of the landlady's perfidy, the chemist's dishonesty, the exorbitant price of coals, and all the "troubles and trials of this tedious winter."

"It's a wonder the childer's alive, and it's a wonder the mistress is alive," she concluded, "and the poor Captain himself worn out, and that chating chemist thyring to stick on another sixpence for the medicine."

"Oh, but this will never do!" exclaimed Miss Goldney. "Captain Lennard must let me have the children while his wife is ill."

When Captain Lennard came downstairs they all had tea together out of white tea-cups set in a row on a black tray, which was placed, with a good deal of consequence, by Norah on the plushette table-cloth. A lamp was lighted, which showed Miss Goldney's beautiful features to greater advantage than ever, and Roger put everyone entirely at their ease by spreading out the whole of his tin soldiers on the table, and insisting on everyone joining in a game while tea was going on. He had his father firmly in hand this afternoon, and continued to do and say what he liked. He choked over his bread and butter, breathed loudly into his cup, spilled his milk, and endeavoured to sing "Auld Lang Syne" like the Waits.

Miss Goldney cut cake for him and gave him jam, and said he was quite the nicest boy she had ever met. She begged his father to let both the children come to her house the very next day. The country air would suit them, her own nurseries had never been dismantled, and her old nurse still reigned there and would welcome the children with delight. Norah could stay behind to look after Mrs. Lennard.

Somehow, after that, everything seemed to go right! Lovely flowers filled the invalid's room. There was a big luxurious carriage to take her for drives in the afternoon. The landlady's cooking was discounted altogether in favour of hot-house fruit of all sorts and delicacies sent straight from the Goldneys' house. The children flourished and grew strong, and the one blot on the general happiness might have been the fact that Roger, having started on a downward course, continued that course at break-neck speed. There

was nothing that was forbidden at home that he did not do at the Goldneys'. He turned water on from taps and soaked his pinafores. He never said grace, he ate his food too quickly, and, last of all, he rose from his bed one night when no one was looking, and, clad only in his night-gown, marched into the dining-room where dinner was going on. His uncle was dining there that night, and Master Roger half thought that, being an uncle, he might administer a scolding, but Sir Walter seemed far too engrossed and too happy to dream of such a thing. He was sitting next Miss Goldney, who wore a lovely white satin gown, and he was telling her with his voice all about the frontier campaign, but with his face and his eyes he was telling her quite plainly, without being the least aware of it, that he thought her the most beautiful woman in the world and that he loved her completely.

Consequently Roger escaped a scolding. He sat on Miss Goldney's knee and ate grapes and figs, and then preserved plums with sugar over them. Afterwards a tall footman carried him upstairs to bed, and Roger was very sick next day, which he did not mind in the least, because his uncle and Miss Goldney came to the nursery and told him stories when they came back from their ride in the afternoon. Roger was a child somewhat given to making pretty speeches, and he told his fair visitor that she was lovelier and lovelier every day. This statement seemed to afford his uncle some satisfaction, and for no reason whatever he presented his nephew with half a sovereign. The next day his father and mother came to stay in the house, and he basely, and without a moment's hesitation, diverted his attention altogether from Miss Goldney and said he loved his beautiful mummy best. For this his father hugged him, so that it seemed impossible for Roger to make a mistake in these days, and he grew to be what schoolboys call "cocky," and to tyrannise over Norah.

Last of all, when he had become quite unbearable, he announced his intention of marrying Miss Goldney. And it was a distinct blow to his pride when she refused him firmly and without a moment's hesitation.

"But why, why, why?" said Roger, pulling at her dress and quite forgetting his manners, so "out of hand" was he.

"Well, because I am engaged to somebody else," said Miss Goldney simply.

And then she and Uncle Walter looked at each other in the silly way grown-up people have.



(Photo J. Russell.)

THE KING AT BALMORAL

The above portrait appears in a handsome volume, "The Royal Family by Pen and Camera," by Sarah A. Tooley, which contains 120 full-page photographs of Royalty by Mr. J. Russell. The book is a charming record of the life of King Edward and Queen Alexandra.

A TALK WITH "RALPH CONNOR":

THE FAMOUS AUTHOR-PREACHER OF CANADA.

By George T. B. Davis.

A FEW years ago, as a home-missionary spurred his horse onward through the gulches and over the steppes of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, carrying the gospel message to some mining camp, he little foresaw that a decade later his name would be a household word throughout Christendom, and that more than a million and a half copies of his books would find their way into the best homes of England and America. Yet this is the rapid turn of life's wheel which has come to the Rev. Charles W. Gordon, once a Rocky Mountain missionary, now pastor of a flourishing church in Winnipeg, and known the world over as "Ralph Connor," author of "The Sky Pilot," and other books, which paint with master hand the religious life of the Far West.

In foreign as well as English-speaking lands the people have learned to delight in "Ralph Connor's" virile pictures of primitive life in the western plains and hills, and already his books have been translated into French, German, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, and Hungarian. In America his popularity has increased at a phenomenal rate. The first edition of "Black Rock" in Canada ten years ago was 800 copies; the first American edition of his new book, "The Doctor," was 100,000 copies.

But the sudden transition from obscurity to fame has not altered the sympathetic modesty of the man's nature, or lessened his fer-

vid zeal for the salvation of his fellow men. Though he has been urged again and again to give up his pulpit, and though a small fortune was offered him annually to devote himself entirely to literary work, yet he has resisted every appeal in order that he might continue to preach Christ and Him crucified.

Without doubt Dr. Gordon's reluctance to leave his pulpit for the golden allurements of literature was due to the fact of his godly Scots ancestry and training. His father, the Rev. Donald Gordon, who is still living, went from Scotland in the early forties to the Canadian forests to do pioneer work in a Gaelic settlement. His mother, who was also Scots, and a daughter of the manse, was a woman of superior intellectual and spiritual attainments. Thus even in his youth Gordon had instilled into his soul the real meaning of life, and saw clearly the folly of any other aim than the salvation of men.

It was during his visit to a Presbyterian Brotherhood Convention in the United States, where the author-preacher delivered several trenchant addresses to prominent laymen gathered from every part of the land, that I first met Dr. Gordon, and heard from his lips something of his ministerial life, and of his methods as a literary creator. I had expected to meet a rather gruff and burly person, a character partaking



somewhat of the characteristics of his early rocky-mountain environment. But instead I found "Ralph Connor" tall and thin, with a gentle manner in striking contrast to the figures which move so strenuously through the pages of his books. He speaks in a clear soft voice, and the outstanding impressions that you carry away after meeting him are his sympathetic friendliness and his consecration to his life work of bringing the Kingdom of God to earth.

Dr. Gordon did not set out to be an author. Nothing was farther from his mind. He simply wrote some sketches to fire other people's hearts with the same home-missionary enthusiasm which burned in his own breast. When I asked him about his first literary work he said:

"It was purely a home-missionary enterprise. I never, never thought of a book. It was simply something that would make home-missions interesting. I know the books would never have been written save for the home-missionary interest in my own mind, and the home-mission problems in the West. It just happened to come to me to express it. There are hundreds doing harder work than I did."

Just how he "happened" to write his first sketches, and how he "happened" to be called "Ralph Connor" makes a fascinating story, which is told by the Rev. J. A. MacDonald, a life-long friend, who originated the pseudonym. Mr. MacDonald is now editor of the *Toronto Globe*. He says:

"One day in October, 1896, I was sitting at my desk wondering about the copy for the November issue of *The Westminster*. That was during the perilous first year. The door behind me swung wide open and a clear, cheery voice, with a low, musical note in it, rang out in a familiar salutation. I knew the voice and was glad to welcome the man. He had been my class-mate at college, my seat-mate in the lecture rooms, and we had sometimes done what was called 'study' together a night or two before examination. I knew him well, and to know a man of his rare good kind is to like him. But he was not in a good mood that day. He had been at a meeting of the Home Mission Committee, where he and the veteran superintendent from the Northwest, his leader and saint, had been pleading for more men and more money to meet the needs of the plains and foothills and valleys and mountain camps. Plainly he was not pleased with the results, and in terms not found in standard literature he railed against

the narrow views and slow hearts and general unfitness of Easterners. It was not hard to listen, for this youthful accuser had seen things with his own eyes and heard sad stories with his own ears, and had withal a heart to feel. He had been in the West for several years. I had seen him up among the Selkirks. The burden of the men in those hard places was heavy on him. He could not understand the unwillingness of men on the Committee to take and hold the strategic points.

"But you can hardly blame them," I ventured, when he had made out his case, and paused to think about it. "They do not know, they never saw the West. When you talk of plains and mountains, and all that wild life, it is nothing to them, for it is not real."

"Well, if they don't know they ought to, and it is your duty to give them the facts."

"Facts count for little," I answered, defending myself. "You and the superintendent and the rest have been giving us facts and figures until the average Easterner has lost count and track. There is not one real thing about the West to those who have not been there, except its bigness; not one bright spot of interest, not one vivid impression. They know nothing about life in your mining towns, and it is your duty to make them know and see and feel."

"I'll give you an article on it," he said, eager to do anything to mend matters.

"Articles are no good if they have only facts and statistics and exhortations. Give me a sketch, a story, a thing of life, rather than a report. Make it true to the life as you know it rather than to mere facts. Put in the local colour. That would touch the imagination and give a basis for your appeal for help."

"The dialogue ran on in that fashion, and ended in a promise that he would write out a story he had told me one evening as we paddled on the Bow near Banff five years before. He left for Winnipeg that day.

"When the story came it bore the marks of a new hand, but, like Elihu, it was full of matter. It was crammed with possibilities. But it was not good copy, not the best the writer could make out of his materials. It was sent back to Winnipeg with a suggestion. The result was a re-casting, which yielded three sketches instead of one, each throbbing with life and pathos and appeal. When the manuscript came again to me it was in the

form in which the first chapter now appears in 'Black Rock.'

"But about 'Ralph Connor.' We had decided upon a name for the story, but not for the man who wrote it. The manuscript reached me just in time for the issue for January, 1897. It would not do to give the author's name, for the text of the tale might be regarded by some readers as out of keeping with the conventions of the clerical profession. What name shall it be? was the question sent to Winnipeg. At the last moment a telegram came: 'Sign sketch Connor.' Connor? That would not do. That would betray the fact of a mask. He must have a proper name. But why Connor? Perhaps the operator made a mistake. Should it be Connor? More likely. But he must be given a Christian name, even though he consorts with heathen of various types. What shall we christen this new-born Canadian litterateur? 'Frank?' 'Chris?' 'Fred?' No, none of these would suit. Here it is. 'Ralph.' 'Ralph Connor.' And so it was. Without his knowledge or consent he was introduced to the world with that new-coined name to make or mar. When he got his copy of *The Westminster* in Winnipeg that week he turned to page 14 and saw the cross-page heading, 'Tales from the Selkirks. By Ralph Connor.'

"What he said when he saw himself as the world was yet to know him has not been told. 'I meant "Connor" ' he wrote a day or two afterwards. 'Ralph Connor isn't bad—rather Irish for me, but I guess I can stand it. I'll try to live up to it.' And so it was that 'Ralph Connor' was found. He did live up to it."

In telling me of how the work, once begun, went on naturally, Dr. Gordon said: "By this time the characters were so vividly before me that I pulled the string and went on."

When enough sketches had been written to make a book, "Black Rock," Mr. MacDonald was anxious to have it published. He carried the manuscript to New York, and canvassed the publishers, but none of them would risk it. They said it would never sell, for there was too much temperance and too much religion in it. Finally it was issued in England and Canada, the latter edition consisting, as has been stated, of only 800 copies. It sold so amazingly that in a few months a dozen publishers were clamouring for the author's book. Up to the present time over 1,200,000 copies of that first volume have been printed.

When I asked Dr. Gordon about his methods, and how he found time to carry on his church and literary work simultaneously he said:

"I am an exceedingly busy man. I have to snatch moments for my writing: half hours and quarter hours from the work of the day. For the last two years I have had to take all my holidays for this work. As the demands of the ministry grow upon me, I find it very difficult to have any time at all for writing. I am constantly urged to give up the ministry and devote myself exclusively to writing. I suppose I would make ten times as much by such a course. But I doubt whether I could have written anything the people would care to read if I hadn't been in the actual work of the ministry. In order to write effectively you must feel these things and be a part of them."

I next asked Dr. Gordon whether he had had many letters from his readers, and of what sort they were. His answer revealed the power the modern novelist exercises over the lives of his readers. He said:

"I have received hundreds of letters from men, thanking me for assistance given in the big fight. Men under the power of drink for years have written of deliverance. I have had letters from men who have been led to Christ through the books. Several have written that they have become ministers through them. Hundreds write for advice, as if I could assist them! I never had any conception of the wealth of human sympathy such as has come to me since I began writing."

At this point "Ralph Connor's" innate modesty asserted itself, as he exclaimed:

"I hate to talk about these things."

Then the slumbering fires within awoke, and with kindling eyes he said:

"But it isn't I who do the work. I believe a man gets his message from above in a book, as surely as the Old Testament prophets got theirs. I never set out to be an author—never in the world! Never meant to be and never wanted to be! And I think I can say this too: that all that has come to me in the way of fame has not made my heart beat one half-pulse quicker. If that was what I was writing for, I would leave it entirely!"

The delineation of character in "Ralph Connor's" books is so clear that many have wondered whether there are any living originals. When I asked which of his books was founded most on fact, Dr. Gordon said:

"They all are. There isn't a book I have

written but what is a rescript of life. They are not photographs, but paintings—composite pictures. The Gleggarry books are a rescript of my early life. I have never had a man with first-hand knowledge of the scenes and figures in my books who said they were not true to life; while hundreds have said: 'I have seen that very thing.' When I go into the West, many ask me if Bill and this man and the other are real persons. The figures are real, the features are real and can be seen; but I group the characters; there is no living original."

Doubtless many readers, like myself, have heard much more about "Ralph Connor" the author than about Dr. Charles W. Gordon the missionary and minister. Hence I asked him to describe in detail his early life as a missionary and his present work as a pastor. In reply to my queries he said:

"My first parish as a missionary was in Southern Manitoba, when I was a student. Later I went to the mountains out in British Columbia, with Banff as my headquarters. I had two kinds of work. I was minister to all the tourist population passing through.

That was a small part of it. Then I worked in the coal mines of Cannore, and among the lumbermen in the tie and lumber camps. My fields were nearly twenty-five miles apart, and I rode this distance every Sunday and took three services and two Bible classes.



"RALPH CONNOR."

In the morning I preached in Banff, then rode five miles to have Sunday School and preach; then rode the other eighteen miles, and had Sunday School and preached again."

When I expressed surprise at this rather strenuous life, Dr. Gordon said:

"Lots of our men do that. I never enjoyed work as I did then. I would never have left it had I not been called away. I had a call to Winnipeg and refused. Another followed a year later, and my superintendent told me it was time to go."

In describing the tremendous stretch of country which was al-

lotted to the little band of missionaries, Dr. Gordon said:

"I was then acting as clerk of our Presbytery, which was the biggest in the world. It was 600 miles one way, and perhaps 400 the other (an area more than twice the size of the British Isles). We had five ordained men at the chief points, and the rest were students. But we worked the territory and worked it well. We had rough work to do; going up among the mountains and dispensing the sacraments, and establishing missions.

There are now six Presbyteries where sixteen years ago there was only one.

"To-day when I think of our task I wonder at it. We had a fine lot of men—not one of them afraid of man or the devil. Not one ever got his full salary, but not one ever



THE HOME OF "RALPH CONNOR" IN WINNIPEG.

complained. It was a joke at the Presbytery meeting how much we were behind. From the experiences of those days I obtained all the material for my Western stories.

"I have been in Winnipeg sixteen years now. I was called to a little mission with fourteen members on the roll. But we had some fine men who had strength and faith, and were not afraid to put their energies behind their faith. Winnipeg then had 25,000 inhabitants; to-day it has 100,000. Our church has grown with the city, and we now have between 400 and 500 members. An important feature of our church life is our club work to interest the young men and women who have just come to the city."

My last question to the author-preacher was concerning the spiritual condition and needs of the great North-West at the present time. His reply shows that there is still a crying need for men, that is, men of the right calibre. He said:

"The country is quite new. Everything is in a growing condition. Our chief danger is the danger of all America—materialism. We are a very law-abiding, religiously disposed people. We are opening more than one mission station each week—over sixty last year. Our chief difficulty is the securing of men. We cannot get men enough. I greatly wish that some men of the right sort, who are not afraid to endure hardships, might come out and help us."

BETHLEHEM.

"Only where He was homeless are you and I at home."—G. K. CHESTERTON.

ALL the heavens were filled with music
When the homeless Christ drew human breath;
Coarsely-cradled where the beasts fare,
"In a manger laid," the Scripture saith.

Westwards over moor and mountain,
Treasure-laden came the men of lore;
There in Bethlehem's humble stable
Lo, the homeless Infant they adore!

Centuries pass, and ever homewards
Come the myriad souls that wander far;
Eyes mist-holden in the darkness
Light with hope where gleams the royal star.

When the Father's House is furnished—
When the children cease to sin and roam,
Grateful hearts shall swell the praises
Of the Christ Child Who hath brought them home.

THOMAS COMBER.

A CHRISTMAS APPARITION.

A Complete Story by Morice Gerard, Author of "The Red Seal," "A Lieutenant of the King," Etc.

I.

A PROPOSAL.

A MAN and a girl had galloped across the downs on a Yorkshire headland, and now pulled up sharp at the edge of the cliff. The horses tossed their heads, snorted, and spat-tered themselves and their riders with white foam. Below, and far away to the hazy horizon, lay the North Sea. The sky presented a massive dome of azure, flecked here and there with light fleecy clouds. To the left lay a small harbour with numerous craft moored within it, or riding at anchor just outside, where the configuration of the land afforded protection from chance gales. On one of the latter vessels Bernard Gallater's eye rested with pardonable pride. It was *The Bessie*, a five-ton yacht, one of the best and fleetest little boats on the Yorkshire coast, and it belonged to the rider who now looked down upon it.

"I shall go for a sail this afternoon. Will you come, Irene? It is a glorious day," he added enthusiastically, either not waiting for an answer or knowing beforehand what it would be. "Look at those fishing boats! Heavy as they are, they skim along like birds before a breeze!"

He pointed with his whip to half-a-dozen brown-sailed smacks, a quarter of a mile away or more; then emphasised his illustration by indicating the sea-gulls, which skimmed, gleaming white in the sunshine, in all directions, uttering their discordant cries.

It was the 1st of October, 1804, a day never forgotten by the principal actors in the ensuing drama. On the previous evening Bernard had returned to Cleeston Hall from a round of visits in Scotland. In a week he expected to swing himself on to the box-seat of "The Tally-ho," one of the best-appointed stage coaches in the East Riding, *en route* for Oxford for his last term, degree, and then—Holy Orders. He was an only son. His father, Robert Gallater, Esq., J.P., D.L., had a fair estate, with a well-endowed benefice included in it. It was not the latter which attracted Bernard to the Church; but motives of a far higher kind, a real love of the work which lay before him. Such high aims were by no means inconsistent with a full measure of animal spirits, an addiction to all kinds of

sport, great proficiency in handling a yacht, managing mettlesome horses (like the handsome, flea-bitten grey he now bestrode), shooting, and fishing.

Mrs. Gallater, having no daughters of her own, had practically adopted Irene Vanscombe, a distant connection, and a girl with a nice little income derived from the Funds. Irene was a year younger than Bernard. She regarded him as her *beau idéal* of manhood, and she was not far wrong. They had been brought up together. It may or may not seem curious, according to the trend of the reader's experience, that only during the last few months had Bernard Gallater discovered that Irene had ceased to be a frolicsome girl, an excellent playmate and boon companion, with the unfortunate disability of her sex—think of that! the disability of her sex!—and was fast budding out into a beautiful woman.

From the time of that startling perception, Bernard had been compelled to focus his ideas afresh. He had to alter his mental standpoint, and, being of a slow but sure intellectual disposition, it took him some time to discover (what, perhaps, Irene had found out previously) that—he was in love. The new discovery had settled deep during those weeks of absence. He was sure now of himself, but by no means sure of Irene, fully conscious—or he would not have been worth his salt!—as he told his mother, that he was not deserving of her.

Irene, whatever her views, kept her own counsel. She was not going to allow a flicker of an eyelid, a chance glance from grey eyes set under a wide, white forehead, a surprise blush on damask cheek, to tell the tale of her thoughts—until the time came. She was a year younger than Bernard in actual age, but with all the distilled centuries of woman's wisdom, how acquired and handed down no one knows, to guide her in thought, speech, and action.

"Thank you, Bernard. No, I cannot. I have promised to drive with your mother to call at Moreston Castle. Besides—I do not know why—of late I have not cared for sailing. Somehow, the sea seems so treacherous, and when I go to the fishermen's cottages, and find here and there a widow and little children—no husband! no father!—and think of the hungry waters—" She broke off with a little choke in her utterance.

"There is danger and risk in all callings, and in nearly all sports," Bernard suggested, looking at Irene with renewed love and admiration, as her woman's sympathy and tenderness made themselves apparent.

Disability of sex, indeed! What was there in all creation which compared with a woman at her best?—and what woman could compete with Irene Vanscombe?

"Oh, I would not have you men think and feel as I do. That would not be manly. Of course," she added, "I know we are all in God's hands, and that ought to rob us of fear—and foreboding."

The girl shuddered slightly as she uttered the last word in a lower tone. Her horse started when her body vibrated with this unwonted exhibition of emotion. Irene controlled it with a firm hand on the snaffle. Bernard swung himself off his horse as the remark fell from her lips. He felt he wanted to be nearer to her when he talked, so that he could see her full face, and look up into her eyes. Would they indicate encouragement, or show him that friendship and nothing more, association, propinquity, no deeper stirring of unknown depths, answered to his longings, and met his needs?

He walked to her side, the bridle in his hand, the grey following, its head down, trying to find a few longer blades of grass on that sandy, wind-swept surface.

Irene, as he did so, began to speak rapidly. Her face flushed, her breath came and went in quick gasps. Intuition told her something was coming which she longed for, and yet her maidenhood and her bashful shrinking sought to postpone—almost to evade, not quite!

"I cannot bear to think that men are fighting on the sea, that our own sailors and soldiers are facing hourly perils, just because of the insensate ambition of that terrible man."

Napoleon Buonaparte was indeed an ogre—his was a hateful name throughout the length and breadth of England in that year of grace 1804, and for many a year before and after. Then, most of all, for the threat of an invasion of England, and the vaunt of a world-empire, were insistent.

The girl was not looking at Bernard. Her face was set seawards, as if her mental vision could look over it to the beyond, where great things were happening, not, indeed, so much across the North Sea as on the other side of the English Channel. The eyes of the young man feasted themselves on the fine profile, delicate little ear, wavy gold-brown hair, a trifle wind-blown and disarranged, which grew low down on her forehead, on the supple grace of her still

immature figure as she sat her horse. He did not speak for a minute or two, having other things to occupy his attention. So at length Irene shot at him an embarrassed glance, from under overhanging blue-veined lids. The silence Bernard maintained was making her uncomfortable. She knew he was looking at her, and she wanted to look at him, into his brown eyes and frank face, to note his broad chest and manly figure—yet she dare not.

"Why have you dismounted?" she inquired, with just a little trace of impatience in her voice. It was trying to be just looked at and not be able to do aught in return.

The fresh wind swept the upland and fanned her hot cheeks.

"To come nearer to you, Irene!"

She made as if she would turn her horse and canter away, but the young man laid a firm hand—the left, as his right was holding his own bridle—on Irene's rein.

"I came nearer to ask you something, Irene."

"Were you not near enough before, Bernard? I have a very good hearing"—she dropped her voice and added *sotto voce*, yet he heard or guessed it—"for things I want to hear."

"How am I to know whether you want to hear it or not unless I look into your eyes?"

He certainly could not see them then, for they were quite veiled.

"Why should not we ride on? The horses are breathed, and I did enjoy that last gallop so much."

"You cannot put me off. I mean to have an answer." He reproved her as if she were a petulant child and he a greybeard.

"How very determined!" she remarked ironically. "How can I answer a question I have not heard—and suppose I do not choose to reply, who is to make me?"

He shifted his hand from the rein to grip Irene's fingers.

"It is a very short question, but it involves all our lives, it involves all my happiness." His voice showed by its vibration the earnestness and depth of his emotion. "I hope it means as much to you, dearest, as it does to me—I want you to be my wife—to marry me, Irene—will you?"

Then she turned and looked him straight in the face, her eyes enlarged, their pupils dilated.

"Are you sure you mean it—that you know your own mind, Bernard? You have seen so few—other girls—and we have been boy and girl together. Are you sure it is love—not—not—just nearness—and friendship?"

"I love you with all my heart. I have never

loved anyone else, and I never shall—be your answer what it may."

He shifted his hand and lifted his hat with a look upwards, as if to consecrate his words to the level of a sacrament in the sight of Heaven itself. Irene bent over him, reading the resolution in his eyes.

"I believe you," she said; "and as you love me so I love you."

So he reached up to her and she down to him. Their lips met for the first time. The vow of abiding love was registered under the blue vault of the sky, and with the sea-gulls overhead as the only witnesses.

"I think if you had said me nay, Irene, I must have gone to the wars instead of to Oxford, as my father has sometimes wished that I should, when the hour seemed darkest, and England most to need her sons."

"But you have other work to do, and I can help you in it, thank God! I could not help you if you had become a soldier, except with my prayers, when you were far away."

"You will always help me with them, Irene," he said earnestly.

"Yes—always—ever! absent or present—by my side or away from me, you shall have the centre place as I kneel beside my bed."

Although he had all he wanted, a shadow rested on his spirit, for which he was quite unable to account. He knew that his nature at such a time ought to be suffused with joyousness. So he did rejoice, whole-heartedly, yet felt a lurking chill in the air, and about the fibres of his being, for which the warm October breeze certainly could not account.

Bernard had not remounted. Irene was walking her horse homewards at a slow pace, while he strode by her side, leading the animal he ought to have been riding. The girl did not remind him of her desire for a gallop now that her embarrassment had passed!

II.

NO NEWS.

MR. AND MRS. GALLATER were held in the highest respect by gentle and simple alike for many miles round Clecston Hall. They were beloved by tenantry and servants.

Robert Gallater was of the finest school of country gentlemen, living on his estates, managing them for the benefit of others as well as himself, having regard to the well-being and housing of labourers, and to the prosperity of the farmers who rented his lands. His habits, and the sobriety and courtesy of his

language, were in marked contrast with those of most of his contemporaries of the same station and period. In addition, on the bench of magistrates, in his four-square pew in Clecston Church right in front of the pulpit, and, not least, at home, Robert Gallater, in his white wig, tied behind with puce-coloured ribbon, blue coat with brass buttons, high neckerchief, and knee breeches, looked the picture of a high-bred English gentleman.

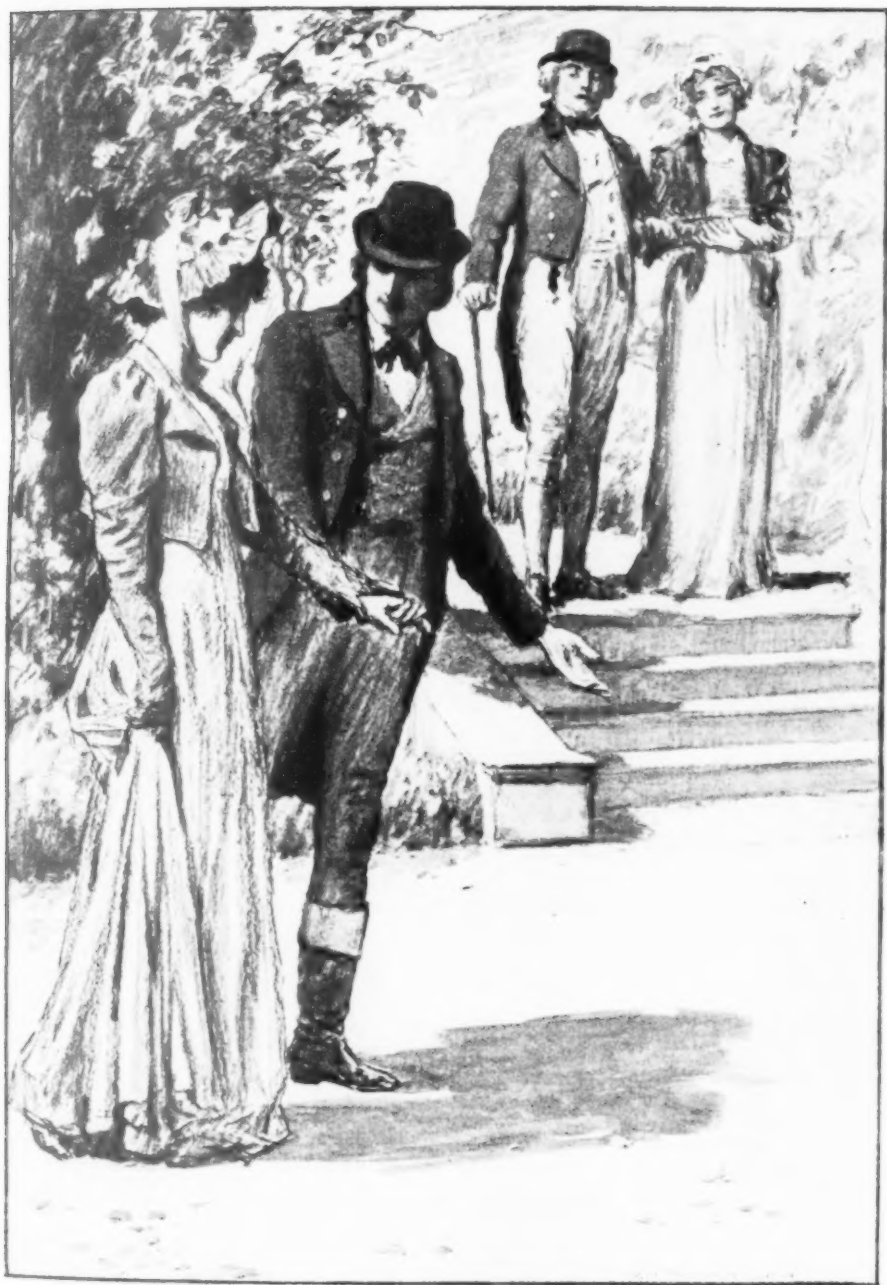
Mrs. Gallater matched him in her high cap and stiff brocaded dress for great occasions, with one of softer material for more ordinary use. At her neck was a handsome cameo brooch, and from it depended a thin gold chain, attached to a watch, which kept time as accurately as did the eight-day clock dominating one corner of the great hall-place. They were a wonderfully handsome couple, between fifty and sixty years of age— hale, healthy, happy.

The before mentioned clock had just struck one when Bernard Gallater and Irene rode into the courtyard. A groom came forward to take the horses to the stables. Bernard, with a sense of proprietorship which betrayed itself, without his suspecting the fact, lifted the girl from her saddle. Neither horse was in the least distressed. The truth was that they had been walked all the way—some two miles—from the foreland home. Bernard and Irene had so much to say to one another, and it could not be said at a hand gallop.

Within five minutes it was buzzed in the stables, and in the servants' hall, that Master Bernard had proposed to Miss Irene, and that there was to be a match. So much for a secret which we imagine shared by no one else.

Mr. Gallater had come in, a footman informed the new-comers, and was with Mrs. Gallater in the covered garden at the back of the house. Here Bernard led Irene at once, much against her will. She wanted to run away and leave him to do the telling alone, but the young man was masterful and obdurate. He was sure it was the right thing they should communicate the intelligence together, and receive a blessing straightaway. So he led her by one hand, she hanging back and blushing, loth and yet willing, shy and yet happy.

Mr. and Mrs. Gallater were walking under the south wall, where a few egg-plums still peeped out of rapidly browning leaves, hastening to ripeness under the mellowing sun of autumn. Hearing steps, the older folk turned and saw—what they saw; and read its meaning. Madame Gallater had been privy to it all along, but her husband was taken by surprise, as is the way of men, especially fathers, not



"Hearing steps, the older folk turned and saw—what they saw."

realising their son's maturity before it is so ripe that there is no gainsaying it.

"I have pleaded with Irene to promise me herself in marriage, with your consent, sir, and yours, dearest mother—and she has not said me nay."

Then Irene hid her face and her blushes on his shoulder.

So the betrothal was ratified, to the hearty satisfaction of the elders and the joy of the parties immediately concerned, under the sky.

After the midday high meal, which was served with some circumstance, the horses drawing the smaller family coach were brought round to the front entrance, coachman and footman in powdered hair on the box and di-key respectively. Mr. Gallater had gone out with his gun and dogs. Bernard handed the ladies into the carriage, and then walked towards the inlet, where his yacht lay moored to a stump. Perhaps if his instructions to be in readiness had not been sent earlier to Aaron Goatly, the fisherman, who with his son Job, a youth of eighteen, formed the crew of the boat, Bernard might have yielded to the temptation of accompanying the ladies, rather than sailing alone that afternoon—and this chronicle never have been written.

The wind had risen considerably since the morning. Across the azure of the sky there trailed long wisps of vapoury cloud, like the feathers of a gigantic sea-bird. Bernard was unconscious of these changed conditions, and would not have heeded them had he recognised their existence, for he trod on air, intoxicated by the new happiness which had come into his life.

"There will be a cap-full of wind outside th' sandy bank," Aaron remarked, as he made preparations for casting the yacht loose.

No answer.

"There'll be more to follow—freshish afore nightfall."

No answer.

Bernard, mechanically doing his part in launching *The Bessie*, was yet some distance away in mind. He was indulging in the luxury of visions, present and future. So what was intended as a warning passed unheeded. *The Bessie* headed for the open waters of the North Sea, ploughing the waves as they surged and eddied around her bows with the confident assurance that there was no finer or speedier boat of her size anywhere from Tyne to Thames. Some wiseacres on the shore, who watched the white sail of the boat until it was indistinguishable from sky and sea, shook their heads. It was easy to go out with the wind at the back.

It would be fighting to get in again, with a "sou'-wester in your teeth."

So it proved. The wind rose to half a gale, steadily driving across the now boisterous waters. *The Bessie* did not return.

The night drew on. Robert Gallater, his wife, and Irene came down to the beach. "The Squire" was not a waterman; but a landsman who has lived half a century or so by the ocean learns to know its moods, and acquires its craft instinctively. Mr. Gallater knew perfectly that while that wind continued *The Bessie* would not be sighted from the highest point of the foreland. When the night settled down thick and starless, the anxious trio turned back to the Hall, trying to keep up each other's spirits, yet most of all conscious of the depression within.

For three days and nights consecutively the sou'-wester maintained its force, never quite a gale, never sinking to a mere breeze, just quietly persistent. Mrs. Gallater and Irene could hardly keep themselves from the shore. They varied their place of outlook from foreland to beach, but continuously those yearning eyes swept the seascape—for that which came not. They prayed, but the Heaven above seemed far away, and the Ear of the Universe inattentive to those passionate appeals.

Days passed into weeks, weeks into months. *The Bessie* had sailed away with her three lives—no one doubted that the mystery of her fate would only be unravelled when the sea gave up its secrets, at the final awakening.

Fortunately Aaron Goatly and his son had no near of kin to mourn their loss. After the death of Job's mother they had lived in a three-roomed cottage alone, hard by the fore-shore. Now the whitewashed building stood empty. It was the property of the Squire, and he certainly had no heart to let it afresh. To do so would be to proclaim to himself, as well as to others, that hope was dead and buried, that the loss was final. So the chairs and table, the plates in the rack on the wall, the long clay pipe, half smoked, on the high chimney shelf, remained untouched.

After a little while no one cared to pass by way of the Goatlys' shanty after dusk, and many folks preferred a longer route even by day. For the age and the seaside dwellers were alike full charged with superstition, and it soon began to be whispered, doubtless without any foundation, that uncanny lights shone from the narrow, diamond-paned casements, especially when storms beat upon that coast. A round-backed wooden chair in the ingle nook that awaited a burly form which never occupied it; a pipe laid down to be finished later, and

never taken up again; a doorstep never crossed by tangible human shapes; a cottage furnished yet not lived in, or let again—were not these enough causes for all the whisperings and shakings of the head, which grew in volume as time went on and nothing happened.

Irene! Her maturing womanhood seemed robbed of its sap. She grew wan and almost old-looking, although not yet reached to the fulness of her maturity. Her eyes had their dark circles, and looked out from weary depths of unfathomable sorrow.

"To have known, only to have known something!"—that was ever the cry of her heart, yet God in His wisdom draws a veil over the horizon of life. He shows us sometimes only a part of the present, and none of the future. The vision is limited by Infinite Love, not the caprice of circumstance. Irene found her one solace and work in relieving and sympathising with the needs and sorrows of others. Many a fisherman's home, many a shepherd's cottage—lonely and isolated on the moorland, away from the sea—was visited by feet which never seemed to tire when there was a call for tender helpfulness.

Those were eventful years. Trafalgar on the sea, Austerlitz on the land. On the one element the Union Jack floated almost unchallenged; but on the Continent the imperious force of one master mind carried all before it.

Of these things Irene understood but little. She was wrapped in the absorption of her great sorrow.

III.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

AS long as the oldest inhabitant could remember a supper had been given on Christmas Eve, in the great hall-place of Cleeston, to the tenants and cottagers on the estate. After the tragic disappearance of *The Bessie*, her owner and crew, the annual banquet was discontinued for two years. Then normal conditions began to obtain once more. The times alike of uncertainty and of mourning were over. The sea had refused to give up its secrets. Hearts were riven as much as ever, but outwardly calm and resignation had supervened.

In December, 1806, Squire Gallater said to his wife, "I think we ought to gather our friends about us on Christmas Eve. My grandfather and father regarded it as almost an obligation, and we must begin again some time."

"I think so too, although I shall dread it," Dame Gallater responded; "and Irene! She

ought to go away. It is the decorations and all the preparations—you remember, dear, how the—how—Ber—"

But neither sentence was capable of completion.

"Yes, I know. We shall all see him—and yet not see him. I agree Irene had better go to our cousins in Derbyshire. She would never be able to bear it."

But the girl was made of stancher stuff than the old people realised. She would not leave them to bear the burden alone. No arguments would move her from this position. So she stayed, and, with white face and a quivering mouth, took the directions into her charge of setting the long tables on trestles, seeing them made gay with spotless napery, plate, silver, and glass; festooning holly and ivy round family portraits, and trailing wreaths of evergreen from side to side, and end to end, of the hall-place. As Irene went about her task, directing the servants, she felt even more vividly than heretofore a presence by her side, invisible yet real, painfully real.

In the spirit, if not in the flesh, Bernard Gallater was in the Hall.

Irene could have cried it out aloud in her certitude and mental stress and pain.

The day was clear, with that curious clarity which sometimes precedes snow. The wind was blowing from the north, icy cold, over foreland and fishing craft, neither from the sea nor from the land, but transversely, edgewise. After the midday meal Irene cloaked herself in a long fur mantle and went out. That impulse which often drove her forth to gaze out seawards, was on her now with more than usual force. She had not lost the sense, with the completion of the preparations, that Bernard was very near to her.

As the girl approached the foreland, the highest point of the district, the place where the cup of joy had been raised to her lips, where she had sipped from it—and then seen it dashed to the ground—she was surprised to find nearly the whole population of the sparsely inhabited neighbourhood gathered on the spot. As a rule it was empty, except for sheep cropping the short herbage, and the sea-birds wheeling over it. When Irene Vanscombe approached, the whisper of her coming began to circulate through the company of men and women. They drew aside, while they looked askance.

The girl was at first impelled to return. She had come expecting solitude, and instead had found an assemblage; but an inner resolution, stronger than the instinct of retire-

ment, held her on her way. Something told her that before her, beyond, was a sight which meant more to her than to anyone else among that strangely hushed crowd. So she went on, and reached the unguarded edge of the cliff. Away to the horizon lay the grey, foam-flecked sea. From being clear the sky was becoming overcast, with a heavy brown film, except just overhead, where the red sun, mist-circled, shone fitfully.

Irene's eye travelled in the direction towards which all those other glances pointed, as the men saluted while she passed. Her pulse quickened. She could hear the throbbing of her heart. A mist—the mist of unshed tears—clouded the sight of her beautiful eyes. Irene wiped them with a dainty lace kerchief, and looked again.

Far out, near the horizon, against the darkening background, with sail aloft to catch the breeze, sinking into the trough of the waters and ever rising again, was a five-ton yacht, the very build of the lost *Bessie*, and yet, somehow, looking different.

The Squire was the only man on the coast owning a telescope. Irene sent a messenger for it to the Hall. She neither bade him tell Robert Gallater what was the vision which held them all spellbound, nor did she tell him to withhold it. So, of course, the man imparted the news, and the Squire came with the glass, hurrying. He had forbidden that the intelligence should be imparted to Dame Gallater, for the old man gave but little credence to the story, as too good to be true.

Robert Gallater, standing by Irene's side, brought his telescope to focus, and, holding it with unsteady hand, at length brought it to bear on the object of his search. By this time the darkness of coming snow had come on apace.

"It is like *The Bessie*," he announced, "yet unlike. The sail is dingy and stained. There are figures on her, but I cannot distinguish them. My eyes are growing old."

Yet as the Squire spoke, both he and Irene knew this was not the real cause of his failure of perception. Neither could she see, for her eyes, though young, had a similar disability. Then flakes began to fall, first one here and there; later in ever-thickening, denser quantity. The horizon ceased to be; the sea disappeared slowly; only the beating of the surf on the rocks reached them. The ship, whether phantom or real, whether *The Bessie* or some other craft, like and yet unlike, was finally blotted out from all eyes.

Quickly the crowd dispersed, to talk over the

vision of that Christmas Eve, in awestruck whispers, in each other's cottages.

Robert Gallater gave Irene his arm. As they entered the Hall she said, "He is coming back to us." But the old Squire only shook his head.

It was not a merry company which met in the great hall-place of Clecston that night. The snow was falling thickly outside, and the atmosphere of the oak-raftered apartment was gloomy and murky, in spite of lanthorns and cressets, the latter fixed at intervals along the walls.

All the best of Christmas cheer was on the tables, with flagons of home-brewed, flanking rounds of beef and raised pies. The Squire and Dame Gallater sat at one end, with Irene occupying nominally a place by the latter's side, but the girl was restless, and, making an excuse to see that the steward and servants did their duty by the hundred and twenty guests, she flitted about the hall, eating and drinking nothing herself.

Strange glances were cast upon her askew, for men wondered what she believed of that vision, which had met all their eyes a few hours earlier, before the snow blotted it out. Perhaps Irene knew of this scrutiny, and interpreted it aright; perhaps she did not. They all loved her, and their love and sympathy kept them from enjoyment of the good cheer lavished upon them. Presently the steward stood at the end of the hall-place to call a toast. They were to drink "To the Health of the King and Confusion to his Enemies." The call was responded to, all standing. Always before the Squire had proposed this himself, but that night he had deputed the task to Master Gynett, the steward—lacking voice, Robert Gallater averred; lacking heart, the real reason.

The men sat down, and, after the cheering, the silence seemed insistent by way of contrast. As the silence held them, another feeling supervened—expectancy! They expected they knew not what. The steward was to call his master's health next; but, standing, he was mute—he gaped, listening; yet why he listened he could not have told. Not a glass clinked, not a knife clattered, not a servant stirred to replenish empty cup or platter. Into that silence came a loud knocking at the great hall door, giving upon the hall-place where they were all assembled.

A greyness came upon manly faces; each looked at his neighbour, asking a question, which none dared attempt to answer.

But Robert Gallater stepped resolutely from his place and strode down the hall, past

the crowded tables, with set face, more erect than he had been since *The Bessie* left the inlet and failed to return. Irene sat bolt upright in her chair, her gaze on the door, one hand to her breast—waiting for what would come.

The Squire shot the bolt back and uplifted the heavy latch. A man's figure entered, followed immediately by two more. The snow swept in with them, swirling in the

the first and younger of those two bearded men.

What pen shall describe the scene that followed? Robert and Dame Gallater first; then the gathering round of the men; the cheer that went up; the eager attendance of all on those famished seafarers, fresh from the French prison where they had lain ever since *The Bessie* fell a prey to a French cruiser on October 1st, 1804. There had been an ex-



"'It is like *The Bessie*,' he announced."

wind. Their coats were flecked all over with white. Two of them were bearded, almost beyond recognition; their faces were worn and white. The third was white, too, but not bearded. The men in the hall-place stood up, but not one advanced a step.

Were these real men, or was it the end of the vision on the Christ-Eve? One had no doubt, no hesitation, no fear, only great and overwhelming joy.

Irene sped down the hall and flung herself, heedless of snow, straight into the arms of

change of prisoners. Bernard and his crew, set free, had sailed *The Bessie*, dingy and travel-stained, up the North Sea towards that inlet of the Yorkshire coast, to which hourly their hearts had gone hungrily during those long months of exile.

So once more was there Christmas joy, deep, thankful, abiding, in the hearts of those who had suffered, and mourned, and prayed, who had lost what they loved most dearly, and had had it given back to them out of the snow on the Christ-Eve.

CHRISTIAN MIRTH.

By the Right Rev. Bishop Welldon, D.D., Dean of Manchester.

"I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth."—ECCLESIASTES ii, 1.

AMONG the many honoured graves in Westminster Abbey there is one upon which it never fails that fresh wreaths of flowers, sent as memorial gifts from various parts of the world, are still reverently placed by unknown hands on each succeeding 9th of June. It is the grave of Charles Dickens. He died at Gad's Hill in 1870. Five days later, in the presence of but few mourners, as he had himself expressly stipulated by will—and those for the most part only the clergy of the Abbey—he was laid to



(Photo: Russell.)
BISHOP WELLDON.

rest, at an early hour of the morning, in the southern transept beside Johnson, and Garrick, and Sheridan, and Macaulay, at the foot of the statue of Addison, and not far from the bust of his great contemporary, Thackeray. Circumstances, the shifting circumstances of the modern world, have perhaps tended to lessen Dickens's popularity. He lived most of his life at the end of an era in English history, just before the consummation of the changes wrought by the vastly improved facilities of locomotion, intercommunication, education, and cheap literature; and to the young generation which has grown up since his death not a few of his characters appear unnatural, if not impossible—and, indeed, they would be unnatural and impossible in the present day.

Waiting for "Pickwick."

But no English writer, ancient or modern, has enjoyed in his lifetime so extensive a vogue as Dickens; nor is there anyone who by his works has evoked such a wealth of innocent laughter from so large a circle of readers, both old and young. There are men and women still living, but stricken in years, who love to recall the expectant eagerness with which they or their parents used to await, about seventy years ago, the arrival of the coaches bringing month by month from London the meagre green-backed

numbers of "The Pickwick Papers." Something of that enthusiasm is reflected, by the touching incident told in the second chapter of Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford." And of all the readers, the thousands of readers, who laughed until their sides ached over the adventures of Dickens's first and foremost hero, there was none who derived from that, or from his other writings, anything but a pure, bright, innocent, and happy delight. He has cast a girdle of merriment round the English-speaking world, but the girdle itself is unstained.

Consider how high a feat that is. It is so difficult to sustain amusement, humour, mirth, on the level of innocence.

"Where lives the man," writes Sir Walter Scott in the "Bridal of Triermain"—

"Where lives the man that has not tried
How mirth can into folly glide,
And folly on to sin?"

Merriment a Test of Character.

"Go to now," says the preacher in the text, "I will prove thee with mirth." It is merriment which is the test of human nature. If I were anxious to learn by any single sign the true character of a person—especially of a young person—I would like to know what he laughs at, what kind of joke or jest he appreciates.

There is the laughter of mere vacancy, the giggle, or the titter. How familiar it is, and how nauseating! What an emptiness of mind it conceals—or reveals! It is compared by Holy Scripture, in the book from which my text is taken, to "the crackling of thorns under a pot." Nothing is feebler, nothing sillier, in the world. There is the laughter of vulgarity. It is raucous and strident. You may hear it as you walk in the parks on a holiday afternoon. It is associated with coarse manners and coarse language. But they who laugh at vulgar stories or laughingly indulge in rude horse-play, especially such as is offensive or injurious to other people, and above all to womanhood, are guilty of lowering the tone of the great community whose citizens they are unworthy to be.

Again, there is the laughter of malevolence. It may be thoughtless or it may be heartless.

But whether it be one or the other, it is vile. "There was a laughing devil in his sneer," wrote one—Lord Byron—who had exemplified only too painfully the evil which he spoke of. Do not ridicule the timid or the sensitive, or the sorrowful, or the afflicted, or the disconsolate souls. Think of Him, try to be like Him, Who never "broke the bruised reed" upon earth, or "quenched the smoking flax." Try to emulate the meekness and gentleness, the tender sympathy of the Saviour, and what a harvest of gratitude shall be yours!

Christians should be Cheerful.

Once more, and lastly, there is the laughter of irreverence, of profanity. It is only too common. Is it not the characteristic of one who pokes his sorry fun at the Bible—as if it were not always easy, in such proportion as a subject is holy, to distort it into ridicule—or at religion or sacred things generally, or at the noble and divine elements of human nature, its unselfishness, its purity, its spirituality? You know the man—you may meet him in your shop or your office to-morrow—who tells ribald or profane stories. No sooner does he come into a room than the very atmosphere seems to be vitiated. It was of such a one that good old Izaak Walton wrote: "Most of his conceits were either Scripture jests or lascivious jests, for which," he added, "I count no man witty."

I do not plead for gloomy moods and sullen faces. I see no reason why a Christian should not be full of humour. If ever there was a saint among the clergy of the Church of England, it was George Herbert; and he was fond of saying that "religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it." Soon after Wilberforce's conversion, somebody who met him expressed surprise at finding him so full of animal spirits, and he replied that there was nothing to prevent a religious man from being merry, as there was nothing to prevent an irreligious man from being dull.

All that I would urge is that merriment is the test of character. Tell me what kind of funny story you like to hear or to relate, and I will tell you what kind of person you are. For then I shall know whether you are a fool in your light moments—perhaps worse than a fool—or whether the Preacher's words are true of you: "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth. . . . Also my wisdom remained with me."

Laughter is the prerogative of humanity. The lower animals, as they are called, never laugh. When man, therefore, laughs at things which are base and bad, he desecrates his special God-given faculty.

But laughter is only the expression of amusement; and all amusement is, as laughter is, a test of character. "No man," said Dr. Johnson to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures."

For most men—for you and for me—life is divided between work and pleasure. Let me rather say between toil and relaxation; for work, if it be truly regarded, is the highest pleasure. Is there anybody, man or woman, who laments the beneficent necessity of hard work? Do you think you would be happier, better, more virtuous, if you had been born, as the proverbial saying is, with a golden spoon in your mouth? Believe me, you are wrong. I am not speaking now of work as a duty entitling you to respect. Yet who can think of the idlers, the spendthrifts, and wastrels of society, but as cumbering the ground, like rotten trees which it were well to cut away? I speak of work as a moral safeguard. Does not your conscience tell you that so long as you are hard at work, with your mind intent upon the papers or the ledger or the figures in front of you, those old, frequent, vexing, evil thoughts are less likely to recur? If I believe any traditional adage I believe this, that

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

And, conversely, I believe that minds fully occupied are like doors barred against the approaches of the Evil One.

Drudgery may be your Salvation.

Do not complain, then, of the stern necessity of earning your daily bread with the sweat of your brow. I am addressing, perhaps, some toiling father of a family, some hardworked youth from a counting-house, or girl from a factory. Do not complain of the drudgery imposed upon you; rather be glad of it, rather thank God for it, for it may be the salvation of your soul. What grievance can it be, brethren, that you and I should be constrained to labour when He Whom we revere as our Lord and Saviour could say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

No, work is a blessing; idleness is the curse. I know your hours of toil will be for the most part hours of safety. But what about your time when work is over? How

do you spend your evenings? How do you spend your holidays? What are your pleasures, your amusements, your dissipations? I know not; I would not even guess. I say only, it is these things which test you. "Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth." It is the person who can and does enjoy himself or herself rightly, innocently, and magnanimously, that is the true Christian.

Degrading Sport.

What a pity, then, is the degradation of noble sports! The horse is in some points the finest of animals. Time was when it lent its name to the thoughts of chivalry. And now it is associated with touts and welshers, and the dissonant voices of the betting ring. I know no experience so lowering to the conception of human nature as when one gets by accident into a railway carriage full of bookmakers on their way to some race-meeting. The very horses upon which they hazard their money seem to be higher creatures than they.

But all I need say is—and I say it in the spirit of my text—there is the test of character, the test which mirth affords. It is a test; but is it not also a lesson? If you and I cannot enjoy a pure game or sport without the adventitious excitement of gaining or losing money, we are proved, tested, judged, condemned in the sight of the Highest.

I have shown how a sport, elevating and ennobling in itself, may sink beneath evil influences until it comes to be, as Lord Beaconsfield said, "a vast engine of national demoralisation." Let me point you now to a brighter example. England is proud of her Press, of the high character which distinguishes her journals. But if I were to say which of all her journals reflects the most credit upon her name, by never overstepping, when it were so easy to overstep, the narrow line which parts art from vulgarity, or licence, I think I should mention the foremost of English comic papers, *Punch*. For here the temptation is strong, as the comic journals on the other side of the English Channel evince; it is strong, but, thank Heaven, it is resisted.

Holiday Behaviour.

Year by year the majority of us take a holiday. We quit our homes; we cast off the restraints of our ordered daily life; we go into the country or to the seaside; per-

haps even to Switzerland or Norway—I cannot tell whither. Forgive me if I offer you two or three thoughts as tending to the elevation—I had almost said to the sanctification—of the holidays.

If we go abroad, it is well for us to leave at home the old-fashioned assumption which has made English men and women so unpopular in the world—that our own national habits and customs, our manners, our prejudices, nay, our very amusements, are alone worthy of respect or regard in the world. We must make an effort—at least on the continent of Europe—to escape from our own insularity. We must show to other nations the same consideration as we claim from them for ourselves. Above all, we must be careful to do nothing that would disturb or distress their sentiments of religion.

Yet it is well for us also to remember that, as travellers abroad, we are—we cannot help being—the representatives of our own dear Fatherland. The natives of other lands, in remote villages if not in populous cities, will judge of our countrymen by ourselves. They will suppose all Englishmen to be such as we are. How grave, then, is the responsibility which rests upon us not to be rude or self-assertive or frivolous, but to exhibit in our personal lives something of the seriousness, the dignity, the God-fearing character which have been ever the highest attributes of English Christianity!

The Seriousness of Life.

And even if we confine our holiday within the limits of the British Isles, still we shall not lack the opportunity of showing that, while we enjoy ourselves, "our wisdom remains with us." We shall not spend money with the foolish extravagance which cripples us for the remainder of the year. We shall not act as though a temporary change of residence could affect for us or for others the law of duty or propriety. We shall enjoy ourselves, and we shall gladly associate our friends and acquaintances, and perhaps even strangers, with us in our enjoyments; but if at any time one of them inclines to transgress by ever so little, in act or in word, the strict line of Christian conduct, we shall say, not ostentatiously, but quietly and firmly, "That must not be." We shall hold converse with Nature: from the mountains and the valleys, from the deep silent glades of the forest and the rhythmical music of the ocean, we shall learn fresh lessons of

God. For "the invisible things of Him," as the apostle declares, "are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."

So shall we come back to our homes, after the brief weeks of the holiday, with a deeper and sterner purpose in life. For life is serious. It is not a game, not an amusement; it is a stern and solemn probation. I spoke of laughter a while ago; I said it was the prerogative of man. But there has been one man Who never laughed; He sighed, He wept, but He never laughed. He it was Who bore the sins and sorrows of the world, and at what a cost He bore them none but He may ever know. Yet you and I may learn from Him the great seriousness of life.

There was an English writer who composed for his own epitaph the lines—

"Life is a jest, and all things show it;
I thought so once, but now I know it."

But it is not a jest. It is real, it is earnest. Every day of our lives is the meeting-point of two eternities. We come into the world by the mystery of birth; we leave it by the mystery of death. For a few years we live beneath the sun, then we go hence, and are no more seen. But upon those few years hangs an issue of eternal moment for our souls. God grant we may spend them not lightly or carelessly or foolishly, but as they who know that the supreme privilege of human nature is to serve God on earth and to enjoy Him eternally in Heaven.



(Photo: Pictorial Agency.)

THE NAVE OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL.



(Photo: Alice Hughes)

MISS ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER, THE WRITER OF OUR NEW SERIAL STORY.

OUR NEW SERIAL STORY.

MISS FALLOWFIELD'S FORTUNE.

By Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler, Author of "Concerning Isabel Carnaby," Etc.

PART I.

PROLOGUE.

ON a summer's afternoon, when the world was some thirty years younger than it is at present, two girls were sitting at tea in a small lodging-house situated in an obscure watering-place on the Welsh coast. The room in which they sat was typical of its time and place. It was on the ground floor, and formed part of what was termed by its owner "the dining-room set," which suite consisted of the said sitting-room and two small bedrooms at the top of the house. True, there was a bedroom upon the same floor which, to the lay eye, appeared to belong by right to the dining-room; but this was an amateurish way of looking at things, as anyone acquainted with the mysteries of seaside lodgings will at once perceive. It is a fixed rule with all lodging-house keepers that the bedroom attached to the dining-room invariably belongs to the "drawing-room set," and, like all other great laws of nature, must be respected and obeyed, even though its why and wherefore remain hidden in obscurity.

This room revelled in the distinction of commanding what is called a sea-view; that is to say, it did indeed face the direction in which the ocean lay, but as it was upon a somewhat lower level than the road, a sight of the horizon-line was only vouchsafed to such occupants as were tall enough to look over the sloping grass in front of the house, and the hedge of tamarisk which formed the boundary of the estate; and even tall people could only attain this glimpse by standing close to the window upon the tips of their toes.

The interior of the room was dreary in the extreme. The paper—a dull red—had been still further darkened by some years' exposure to a persistently smoking chimney; the carpet was perforated by holes which were apt to trip up the unwary, and which were but partially concealed by mats composed of heterogeneous morsels of many-coloured cloths fas-

tened together by string, the original shade and pattern of the carpet being lost in dust and antiquity. The furniture was of that kind which had once obviously been covered with horsehair; but the horsehair had long been worn out and replaced by a material known as American cloth, which is so slippery in cold weather that one finds it difficult to remain seated, and so adhesive in hot weather that one finds it equally difficult to rise. In addition to the chairs used for sitting at meat, there was one (so-called) easy chair and a sofa; but both these articles of furniture had succumbed to a disease which attacks hardly-worn furniture—a disease which transforms the springs into sinews of iron, strong to resist the advances of all those who wish to sit down thereon.

The chimney-piece was adorned with an ormolu clock (out of which the internals had been removed), flanked on one side by an insufficiently attired china shepherdess, and on the other by a bust of John Wesley. Above it hung a tarnished mirror, which was veiled by a profusion of trailing ivy-leaves cut out of green tissue paper of varying shades. According to the landlady, these ivy-leaves were intended to catch the flies, but how flies could be caught by a substance that neither attracted nor retained, she did not trouble to expound. The fireplace itself was filled with a weird object, somewhat resembling a huge chignon of very coarse grey hair, sparsely sprinkled with threads of gold and silver tinsel.

The only other ornaments in the room were two pictures setting forth respectively the Battle of Armageddon and the Last Judgment—inspiring subjects cheerfully portrayed! The former represented a cluster of white-winged, fair-haired young ladies leaning over a battlement and hurling forked lightning at a host of armed and mounted warriors beneath; and the latter depicted a mountain (suffering

apparently from a recent shock of earthquake), clothed on all sides by an extensive cemetery, and crowned with a bevy of white-winged beings similar to those who were throwing the lightning about in the other picture. The earthquake, which had opened a large fissure at the foot of the mountain, had also very much disturbed the cemetery, tossing the tombstones about as if they were spillikins, and evicting the occupants on all sides. A few of the more fortunate of these were being guided up the mountain by a deputation of fair-haired young ladies from the top; but by far the greater part—including a sprinkling of crowned heads, foremost among whom was his Holiness the Pope—were being hustled pell-mell into the abyss by an official armed with a pitchfork.

The two inhabitants of this most unbeautiful "dining-room set" were both young and good-looking. The elder, a girl of about two- or three-and-twenty, was tall and dark, with aquiline features and a fine figure, and would have been extremely handsome had not her face shown unmistakable signs of defiance and dissatisfaction. The younger sister was fair, and bore decided resemblance to those sweet beings in the pictures who hurled the lightning and crowned the mountain tops. Her countenance was smooth and unlined, testifying to one of those happy dispositions which in all circumstances have learnt to be content.

"Oh, Phœbe, I'm sick to death of being poor!" It was the elder girl who spoke.

"Never mind, Charlotte, darling; there are worse things than being poor."

"Are there? Well, I'm thankful to say I've never come across them."

"Oh, but there are," the fair-haired girl persisted. "It would be far worse for us if we were ill or ugly or old maids."

"No, it wouldn't; nothing could be worse for us than our present condition. What is the use of our good looks if we can never dress ourselves properly? What is the use of our health if it is to be wasted upon drudgery? What is the use of our youth if we are never to get any pleasure out of it? I tell you that poverty is a curse which throws a blight upon everything it touches."

Phœbe shook her head. "I don't agree with you at all, Charlotte. Bad dressing matters far less to pretty people than to plain ones; hard work is much easier for strong folks than for weakly ones; and if your youth has brought you a lover, I don't see that it has altogether been wasted."

"And what is the good of a lover if he will never be able to afford to marry you?" asked Charlotte somewhat brutally.

"Lots and lots of good. There's all the fun of the love-making, besides the credit of having got a young man of one's own; and, besides, we shall afford to marry some day—everybody does sooner or later."

"Not people as poor as we are."

"Oh, dear, yes!" retorted the optimistic Phœbe. "People quite as poor as we are get married every day."

"And a nice time they have of it afterwards," was the grim rejoinder.

"They worry along right enough, don't you fear. I can't think why you make such a fuss about our being poor. It is rather horrid, I admit, but it would be far harder if we were old and ugly."

"It will make us old and ugly before our time. Poor people always age far sooner than rich ones."

Phœbe shook her pretty head. "Not if they've the right sort of complexions. It is your skin far more than your pocket that makes you look old or young; and you and I have both very good skins."

"The worry of making both ends meet is fast scoring lines into mine."

"Then you shouldn't worry so much. I wouldn't get wrinkles into my face for anything." And Phœbe rose from the table and peeped at herself in the mirror through the overhanging tracery of ivy-leaves, sighing softly with satisfaction at what she saw therein.

Charlotte and Phœbe Fallowfield were the children of a retired officer, who had no private means, and whose pension naturally did not survive him. Their mother died while they were yet in their infancy; and since their father's death, some few years before this story opens, they had been entirely dependent upon their own exertions for a living. Charlotte was a teacher in a girls' school, and Phœbe a nursery governess in a country clergyman's family. The former was engaged to be married to Herbert Wilson, a clerk in an accountant's office; and the latter to Derek Silverthorne, the happy-go-lucky Irish curate of her employer. But the chance of either of these engagements being brought to a satisfactory conclusion was very remote indeed, owing to the total lack of means on the part of everybody concerned.

These two girls were representative of a class which merits our profoundest sympathy. Born of well-bred parents, they possessed all the sensitiveness and refinement of gentle-people, and yet were debarred by the exigencies of their position from indulging in any of the pursuits and delights which gentle-people love. Further, this very sensitiveness

and refinement unfitted them for that battle for existence which they were doomed to fight; and rendered them specially susceptible to the wounds of those slings and arrows which outrageous Fortune had seen fit to hurl at their innocent heads. They were now enjoying their hardly-earned summer holiday in such a health resort as their very limited means could command. Phœbe, as usual, made the best of things; but Charlotte's artistic susceptibilities were hurt to the quick by the ugliness and squalor of her surroundings.

"By the way, Charlotte, have you been and said a prayer at Saint Winifred's shrine yet?" asked the younger sister, after she had duly contemplated her own charms in the ivy-mantled looking-glass.

"Saint Winifred's shrine! What is that? I've never even heard of it."

"That's just like you! You never hear of anything. That comes of being so stuck-up. You should talk to people as I do, and make friends, and you'd hear no end of interesting things."

Charlotte's lip curled scornfully. "Who would care to make friends of such paupers as we are?"

"Lots and lots of people. As I've told you hundreds and hundreds of times, money isn't everything. If only you are pretty, people will like you, however poor you may be."

"Well, I'm not pretty, as it happens. You are."

Phœbe looked at her elder sister critically. "Not exactly pretty, perhaps, but decidedly handsome; and I'm not sure whether in the long run handsomeness doesn't wear better than prettiness. It doesn't fade so soon. I'm sure I often envy you the dignified expression of your nose. There's a sort of Boadicean, Roman-eagle look about it which is distinctly impressive, and which will go on impressing after my flower-like charms have faded into pot-pourri."

"Never mind my nose; tell me about Saint Winifred's shrine."

"It is a little shrine on the mountain, quite a long way up, dedicated to Saint Winifred, who was a Welsh lady herself, you know. By the way, I wonder if she wore a tall beaver hat instead of a halo. It would have been rather sweet and patriotic of her if she did."

"But what about her shrine? Is there anything particular to distinguish it that you are so anxious for me to visit the sacred spot?"

"The legend is that if anyone climbs up the mountain and prays for something at that shrine with their whole heart, that prayer will be granted. The villagers about here go up

sometimes and pray for things even now; but hundreds of years ago it was quite a celebrated place, and grand people came from all over the country to offer up their petitions. Kings and queens have been there in their day, and have always had their prayers granted."

Charlotte's dark eyes grew dreamy. "I wonder if it is still true, or if the shrine has lost its power? If I thought it were, I would go up and pray for riches; and I am sure I would pray with my whole heart."

"Well, I don't mind telling you that I've been," said Phœbe, waxing confidential. "I went and prayed that Derek and I should soon be able to get married. I thought I'd leave no stone unturned that might help us," she added naively, and with no thought of irreverence.

When tea was over, and Phœbe had gone down to the beach to play with the children of their fellow-lodgers, Charlotte set her stern young face to ascend the mountain. Her sister's story about the old shrine had seized hold of her imagination, and she was bent upon trying for herself if it still possessed its miraculous power. Though naturally reserved, she was inwardly exceedingly sensitive to impressions, and anything connected with the unusual or the supernatural had a strong fascination for her. In happier circumstances, where her powers could have had full scope and developed themselves, she would have displayed marked artistic gifts; but as it was, her whole energy was bent upon the absorbing if uninteresting struggle to earn that daily bread which is absolutely necessary to mere existence.

It was an evening in complete harmony with Charlotte's expedition. Heavy clouds loomed up from the west, chasing each other across the heavens like a procession of war chariots, while below them the sun was slowly sinking to his rest "in a bed of daffodil sky." The sea was disturbed and unrestful, crooning to itself its old, old song in a voice hoarse with the sorrow of the ages, and murmuring its hushed though everlasting defiance against that irresistible decree which has said, "Thus far shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

With a firm yet light step the girl ascended the steep mountain path which led to the little shrine. On and on she sped, all her thoughts bent on her errand, until she was suddenly brought to a full stop, in turning a corner, by coming face to face with a very old clergyman leaning upon a stick. He was tall and thin and evidently of great age; his white hair fell in silvery locks upon his shoulders, but his complexion and expression were as pure as those of a little child.

Charlotte drew her slight figure up against the face of the rock in order to allow the venerable stranger room to pass her on the narrow path; but he made no sign of so doing. On the contrary, he remained standing, looking at the girl with a tender smile which was in itself a benediction, while he said, in the most musical voice she had ever heard:

"Whither away so fast, my daughter?"

There was no impertinence in the question, it was so gentle, so fatherly. It seemed as if he had the right to ask; and Charlotte felt constrained to answer:

"To Saint Winifred's shrine."

"I thought as much; and, if I read your face aright, my child, you are going there out of no idle curiosity, but with an earnest desire to test the efficacy of the shrine and the truth of the old legend."

"Yes, that is so," replied Charlotte simply. Her customary reserve melted like snow in the sunshine of the old clergyman's smile. Then an equally unusual impulse to appeal to him for help seized her, and she asked, "Do you believe it is true?"

"I have lived here for the greater part of a century, my child, and I have known many, many prayers answered that were offered up at Saint Winifred's shrine. It may be that there is still some strange efficacy in the little mountain altar; or it may be—and this I think is the true reading—that those who come to this shrine pray in such faith that it is done unto them even as they wish, since faith is the lever that never fails to move Almighty Power. 'According to your faith so be it unto you,' is the limit which Omnipotence chooses to make unto Itself."

"Then you think if I pray for one particular thing at the shrine, believing I shall get it, my prayer really will be answered?" asked Charlotte, her dark eyes ablaze with excitement.

"I do; and, because I think so, I would first have a word with you before you offer up your prayer," replied the old man, seating himself upon a huge boulder that lay by the path, and motioning to Charlotte to do the same.

She obeyed him without hesitation. There was that in his face which compelled the reverence and submission of all with whom he was brought into contact.

"I was born in this very neighbourhood some ninety years ago," he began, after they both were seated, "and I have spent the greater part of my life here, and many are the supplications which I have known to be offered up at Saint Winifred's shrine. Some of the suppliants have come back to thank God for having

heard and answered their prayers; and some have come back to beseech the Lord to take away from them the very thing for which they once so earnestly entreated Him."

"Then they didn't really know what they wanted when first they prayed!" exclaimed Charlotte.

"Yes, my child, I think they did. They only did not know what God wanted for them, and they set their own wills before His. And so He gave them up to their hearts' lust, and sent leanness into their souls withal."

"But surely we ought to pray for what we want?" argued the girl.

"Certainly; but only if it is in accordance with the Will of God that we shall have it."

"And if it isn't in accordance with His Will?"

"Then we should pray that His Will may overrule ours, and that we may find profit by losing of our prayers."

Charlotte shivered slightly, though the evening was warm. "I couldn't pray like that. If I want a thing I do want it, whether it is good for me or whether it isn't; and if it isn't good for me, I am prepared to take the consequences."

"I see, I see; many are like that. And sometimes God is prepared to let them take the consequences, and so learn wisdom. But this is not the most excellent way of learning."

"It is a better way than not getting the thing you want, and spending the rest of your life in kicking against the pricks. I would far rather be unhappy in my own way than happy in anyone else's."

The old clergyman smiled. "You are very young, my child."

"I am twenty-three."

"And I am ninety-three. Seventy years makes all the difference in one's perspective."

"And I want so dreadfully the thing that I do want!"

"So did I when I was your age; and I prayed with all my heart for it at Saint Winifred's shrine; but I also prayed that God's Will should overrule mine."

"And what happened?"

"Twenty years later I went back to the shrine and thanked God upon my bended knees that He had denied my request."

Again Charlotte shivered. "Twenty years was a long time."

"Not long as compared with ninety, and still shorter as compared with eternity," replied the old clergyman, rising from his seat.

Charlotte rose also. "I think I would just as soon never learn a lesson at all as take twenty years to learn it," she persisted.



"Whither away so fast, my daughter?"

"So I thought when I was twenty-three, my daughter; but I have since learnt otherwise."

"And I am so sure that that what I want is the very thing that will make me good as well as happy that I feel I can ask for it with no reservations whatsoever."

"I was just as sure seventy years ago." The stranger could be as obstinate as Charlotte. "Good-bye, my child," he continued, making way for her to pass him on the narrow path: "go forward to offer up your petition, and may God be with you! But remember that if we set our hearts too much upon anything—if we make up our minds that we will have it whether it is in accordance with the Divine Will or not—we are sometimes taught wisdom by the bitter experience of having our prayers answered at all costs. Sometimes—I speak with all reverence—it seems to me as if God stood aside and allowed us to have our own way, because we have used the great gift of free-will by preferring it to His. And now good-night."

And without another word the venerable stranger went on his way down the mountain.

Charlotte also pursued her errand, undaunted by the old man's warning.

"I am sure," she argued with herself, "that poverty is not only spoiling my life and destroying my chance of happiness, it is also eating into my character and making me bitter and ill-tempered and morbid. If I were freed from the constant strain of pecuniary anxiety, I believe I could develop into a good as well as a clever woman. The three great duties of life are to serve God, to perfect ourselves, and to help our fellow creatures; and poverty makes all three impossible. How can one have time to serve God properly if one is compelled to toil from morning to night to earn one's daily bread? How can one perfect one's own character if one is being constantly jarred and fretted by the sordid and squalid worries which invariably follow in poverty's train? And how can one help one's fellow creatures if one is too poor even to help oneself? I am sure that wealth is the best as well as the happiest thing for me, and I shall pray for it with all my heart, and cheerfully take the consequence of its disabilities—if any disabilities there be."

So the girl communed with her own soul until the path she was following came to an end at a small shrine high up on the mountain, a lonely and impressive spot. On the one side of the path a steep precipice went down sheer into the sea, and on the other the black rock rose straight up skywards; and in this rock was carved a little niche holding a roughly hewn image of the patron saint of the

shrine. In front of the image was a small stone altar, and below that a large stone, worn flat by the knees of the thousands who, in by-gone ages, had offered up their petitions at the wayside altar; while by its side a pellucid spring bubbled up out of the rock and dashed itself over the precipice in a shower of silvery spray.

On the flat stone, where so many thousands before her had prayed and had not prayed in vain, Charlotte Fallowfield fell upon her knees and besought the God Who had made her for the one gift which He had denied—the gift of worldly possessions. She prayed as she had never prayed before, for the atmosphere of the place lent itself to the spirit of supplication, and gave the impression of being in close touch with the Unseen. Far away from the haunts of men, with no sign of human habitation in sight, and with the impenetrable sky above it and the unfathomable sea below, it seemed cut off from all the habitable parts of the earth—such a spot as that where Moses stood when he hid in the cleft of the rock while the glory of the Lord passed by.

There are many voices in Nature for those that have ears to hear them, and they all call us to different things.

The voice of the forest is the voice of love. Have we not all heard the whispering of the woodland which lures us deeper and deeper into the hidden places, with hinted promise: that we shall there at last find our heart's desire? As children we have all felt the fascination of those fairy-tales which told of enchanted castles and spell-bound palaces hidden away in the heart of a wood; and we have all entered into the spirit of the fairy-prince who fought his way through briar and tangle and thorn and thicket till at last he discovered the sleeping beauty who awaited him there. And even children of a later growth feel the spirit of that fairy-prince still stealing over them when they stand in the midst of a forest on a summer's day. Then suddenly all the stories of chivalry and romance become possible. Forest lovers may be found resting under any bush, gentle knights may be seen pricking across any glade. Every tree whispers to us its secret magic, every grassy path beckons us to follow it until we find our beloved awaiting us in a banquetting house whereof the beams are of cedar and the rafters of fir. Every pilgrim of life at some time or other passes through Arcady, everyone's path goes by way of the forest of Arden; and even though we may have travelled a long way since then, and our feet be weary and our faces worn, Arden and Arcady come back to us once more



"In the flickering twilight Charlotte read her love-letter"—p. 74.

when we stand on a summer's day in the heart of a wood.

The voice of the sea is the voice of sorrow—the sorrow of unsatisfied longing, for the sea is never at rest and content; the sorrow of rebellion, for its breakers are for ever hurling themselves in vain against that unseen yet immutable barrier which they may not pass over; and the sorrow of mortality, for its doom is fixed, and it is written that in the new heaven and the new earth there shall be no more sea. Like its own mermaids, who grieve because they have no souls and therefore are not immortal, the sea is for ever bemoaning its finality. It may rage against the children of men when they occupy their business in great waters; it may carry them up to heaven and down again to the deep till their souls melt away because of their trouble; it may dash them to pieces against the rocks and hide their bodies in its caves, where there is no man to bury them; yet it knows that in their essence they are greater than itself, and that its conquest over them is only for a time. For when their corruption shall have put on incorruption and their mortality shall have put on im-

mortality, then the sea shall be compelled to give up its dead, and—like death itself—shall at last be swallowed up in victory.

And the voice of the mountains is the voice of prayer. Over against each other stand the everlasting hills—crag above crag, peak beyond peak, thus forming "the world's great altars," which slope through darkness up to God." And some of God's greatest revelations to man have been made upon a mountain. It was upon a mountain that Elijah stood at the mouth of a cave and wrapped his face in his mantle at the sound of the still, small voice; it was upon a mountain that the favoured Apostles were eye-witnesses of the majesty of their Master, and received the message from the excellent Glory; and it was upon a mountain that the men in white apparel heralded the second coming of Christ to the waiting disciples. Which teaches us that, in accordance with the great doctrine of free-will, man must do his part, feeble though it be, in going forth to meet his God. The Almighty may stoop from heaven to visit the sons of men; but they also must do what they can to rise from earth and meet Him as He comes. Unless they

stretch out the hands of faith towards Him, unless they climb the altar-stairs that lead to His sanctuary, they will never see the glory of the Lord. Those in the valley may tremble before the sound of the tempest and the earthquake and the fire; but it is only those who have scaled the mountain that hear the whisper of the still, small voice.

The spirit of the mountain fell upon Charlotte Fallowfield, and she lifted up her prayer with her whole heart. But to her supplication she added no petition that her will might be overruled by the Divine Will, or her wishes be made submissive to the guidance of Almighty Wisdom. She merely begged for her own will and her own way, and she took no account of any other.

When she came down again from the mountain the evening shadows were closing in, and she found Phoebe sitting alone in the firelight.

"How late you are!" exclaimed the latter; "I was beginning to think you were lost, stolen, or strayed. There is a letter for you from Herbert by the last post."

Charlotte took her letter, which was propped up against the bust of John Wesley, and then proceeded to light the gas in order to read it. The gas—as is the way of gas in lodging-houses—flared up like a gasping volcano and then settled down into semi-darkness, knowing no middle course between setting the house on fire and giving no light at all; and in the flickering twilight, which was the lesser of these two evils, Charlotte read her love-letter.

"Would you believe it," she cried when she had finished. "Bertie is on his way to America by this time!"

"To America! What for? What a funny place for a person like Bertie to go to, who is generally afraid of venturing as far as Clapham Junction for fear of catching cold." Poor Herbert's delicate health was always a subject of scorn on the part of the youthful and vigorous Phoebe.

Charlotte's eyes were bright and her cheeks burning with excitement. "Don't you remember that Bertie had an Uncle Josiah who went to America years ago, and then disappeared?"

"I do recall something of the kind now that you mention it. But I never asked any questions about the matter, as I think it generally kinder not to do so about relations who disappear."

"Well, he has had a letter from this uncle saying that he is very ill and would like to see Bertie before he dies, and sending him the money to defray all his travelling expenses. So Bertie has started for America at once."

"Wonderful pluck on Bertie's part! I hope

he remembered to take a warm coat with him to keep out the cold."

"Phoebe, don't be horrid. Bertie can't help having a delicate chest."

"But he can help coddling it as much as he does. I never knew such a man for taking care of himself. Derek and I think it is perfectly ridiculous."

"Derek and you are strong people," argued Charlotte, doing battle for the lover whom she adored all the more because he leaned upon her and looked up to her, resting his weakness upon her strength. "I wonder if his uncle is a rich man?" she added.

"Not he; uncles never are, or, at any rate, if they are, they leave it all to charity. It's a pretty little way they have."

Charlotte took no notice of her sister's gibes. She was thinking of the little shrine upon the mountain side, and the prayer she had offered up before it. "I wonder if he is," she repeated softly to herself; and she went to bed and fell asleep still wondering.

For over a fortnight nothing happened to disturb the monotony of the little Welsh village by the sea. Then great excitement broke the peace. A letter came from Herbert saying that he had arrived at his uncle's, and had found the latter in a dying condition, though quite conscious and delighted to see his nephew; and the epistle went on to state—much to Phoebe's scornful amusement—that the writer had contracted a slight cold during the voyage, and was nursing it.

"Trust Herbert for catching a cold and making the most of it, wherever he may be!" she exclaimed, greatly to her elder sister's annoyance.

The next mail brought a still more thrilling communication. Herbert wrote that the old man had died, leaving the whole of his fortune to his nephew. Herbert did not yet know the exact amount, but the lawyers assured him that it was something considerable. He went on to say that he had naturally a good deal of business to attend to, but that shortly he hoped to return to England and marry Charlotte off-hand, as now that he was a rich man there was nothing to wait for. His cough, he added, was still troublesome; but now that he could afford to take care of his health and to go to a warm climate when necessary, he felt sure that his chest would soon be quite strong and well again. And he was full of plans for spending the next winter with Charlotte in Italy, and there deriving much benefit for their minds as well as their bodies.

Then, for the first time in her life, Charlotte Fallowfield was really happy; and she went up

to the little mountain shrine and there fell again upon her knees, and thanked God for having given her her heart's desire.

A week afterwards Charlotte received another letter from America; but this time it was not from Herbert, but was in a strange handwriting. It ran as follows:—

"MADAM,—It is with sincere regret that we have to inform you of the death of Mr. Herbert Wilson, the nephew and sole legatee of our late client, Mr. Josiah Wilson. Mr. Herbert Wilson succumbed last night to the effects of a chill contracted upon his voyage from England, which settled upon his lungs. He was conscious to the end, and made a will bequeathing the whole of the large fortune, just inherited from his late uncle, to you. The amount of the fortune is, in rough numbers, a million pounds sterling. Awaiting your further instructions, we have the honour to remain, madam,

"Your obedient servants,

"HIGGINS & VANDERLOW."

CHAPTER I.

A VILLAGE DORCAS-MEETING.

"WELL, for my part, I'm sorry the old vicar is dead," said Mrs. Peppercorn. "That he had his faults I don't deny; he wouldn't have been a man if he hadn't, and of the sort that show, too. Men never can hide their faults as women can—never. He was old and fussy and pernickerty—anyone with half an eye could see that—but he never interfered with the goings-on of his parishioners, and he never preached a sermon that made you feel uncomfortable and dissatisfied with yourself, which is the sort of preaching that I can't abear."

"Oh, he was a good man!" exclaimed enthusiastic little Miss Tovey; "a man with a clean heart and an engaging manner, and the most beautiful complexion for his age that I've ever seen."

But Mrs. Peppercorn would not allow an unmarried woman to give her opinion upon a man in this way—it was altogether out of her province.

"As to his heart, Amelia Tovey, you know nothing at all about it. Nobody sees what's in a man's heart except his wife and his Maker; and I doubt they find it advisable to overlook a good deal that they see, or there'd never be no peace nowhere. And as to his complexion, it was as God made it, and no credit to himself at all."

"Still, a good complexion is a fine thing," said Mrs. Paicey, who was always bent on seeking peace at any cost. "See what a beautiful one you have yourself, Mrs. Peppercorn."

"The gift of God coupled with the use of soap and water," retorted the owner of the said complexion, "and no excuse for pride and vain glory on my part whatsoever."

"What I am always feeling is not so much regret for the Reverend Hanson, since he had his faults, as Mrs. Peppercorn has just passed the remark, but I'm full of fear as to who will come after him," said Mrs. Mawer with a loud sigh. "Mark my words; every change is bound to be a change for the worse, and I've never known it to be otherwise."

"Come, come, Mrs. Mawer," said Mrs. Paicey in an encouraging voice; "you do take a gloomy view of things, to be sure!"

"If you'd lived my life you'd take my views," retorted Mrs. Mawer, "but I'm not one to thrust them upon others against their will. Far from it. I may not say it, but I shall always think it, that this world is a wilderness of care; and you can't see it different whichever way you look at it, and it is no good pretending that you can."

"That's all nonsense," cried Mrs. Peppercorn. "I've lived in the world for over fifty years, and I've come across no wilderness of care."

Mrs. Mawer sighed again louder than ever. It was a wonder that such deep and continuous sighing did not make her giddy. "You weren't married to Mawer," she replied.

This seemed irrefutable, but Mrs. Peppercorn was equal to it. "I'd more sense."

It was the occasion of the weekly Dorcas-meeting in the parish of Dinglewood, which parish had just lately been deprived by death of the vicar who had had charge of it for a quarter of a century. Every Monday afternoon a select company of matrons and maids resident in Dinglewood met together in Mrs. Peppercorn's roomy parlour, to make garments for the poor, and at the same time to discuss at some length the affairs of the parish.

They were a fairly typical group of village women. There was Mrs. Peppercorn, the stout, sensible, well-to-do farmer's wife—a power in the place and a terror to evildoers; and Mrs. Mawer, the depressed and depressing relict of the late postmaster; and Mrs. Paicey, the comely spouse of a market-gardener; and Miss Skinner, of the post office, who had known better (and younger) days, and prided herself upon her advanced opinions; and little Miss Tovey, the dressmaker, who had kept her heart of seventeen through thrice seventeen summers.

"Well, I do hope the new parson, whoever he may be, will be affable and friendly-like, and as kindly as the late vicar," remarked Mrs. Paicey. "I suppose that it's Miss Fallowfield as will have the settling of it, as it were; and she is a sensible sort of lady, as you might say."

"For an old maid, she is," emended Mrs. Peppercorn; "but you can't get the same sense out of an old maid as you can out of a married woman, and it is no use expecting it." Mrs. Peppercorn cherished a profound contempt for all single women—a contempt which was but slightly modified with respect to married women who had no children; and was hardly modified at all with regard to married women with families, who had not succeeded in "settling" their daughters. She herself had married young, had had a healthy and numerous progeny, and had seen all her daughters (there were five of them) comfortably mated. Therefore there was no blot on her matronly escutcheon, and she felt herself in a position openly to scorn and condemn all less successful wives and mothers.

"Isn't it wonderful," exclaimed Miss Tovey, with a flutter of excitement, "to think of a mere woman having the power to settle who the clergyman of a parish shall be? It seems to me too great an honour for a woman, almost as if she were putting herself in the place of God!"

Here Miss Skinner thrust her oar in. "I never approve of private patronage myself; it is a most unfair advantage of the rich over the poor."

"I know what I think," remarked the hostess oracularly, "and those who live longest will see how true it is."

"And what is that, Mrs. Peppercorn? Pray give it a name," entreated Miss Tovey.

"Yes, do, Mrs. Peppercorn!" cried Mrs. Paicey.

The oracle acceded to these requests. "It is my opinion—which you can take for what it's worth, and them as don't value it can leave it alone—that Mrs. Sprott intends to get the living of Dinglewood for her precious son, Theophilus."

At this there was a perfect chorus:

"You don't say so, Mrs. Peppercorn!"

"Surely you are mistaken!"

"Well, I never in all my life!"

"That would be a pretty kettle of fish!"

"Well, to be sure, that is the uptake!"

"You needn't believe me," replied Mrs. Peppercorn; "nobody need believe me that doesn't want to; but, unless I'm very much mistaken, that is Mrs. Sprott's intention. And all I can

say is that if she gets her way I shall join the chapel-folk; for I wouldn't sit under a son of Mrs. Sprott's—no, not if you was to crown me."

Here Miss Skinner took up her parable again. "Ah, now you see the evil of private patronage. Why should Miss Fallowfield have the power to set a man over this parish that we all dislike? I call it scandalous!"

"So do I, Miss Skinner," agreed Mrs. Mawer. "And if we don't dislike him at the beginning, we are sure to come to it in the end, the world being what it is."

"When you come to that," continued the post-mistress, who was now mounted on her favourite hobby-horse, "why should Miss Fallowfield be so rich and I so poor? Why should she be rolling in luxury, while I have to toil for my daily bread?"

"And why should you be able to earn a living for yourself, while others are dying of starvation?" inquired Mrs. Peppercorn.

This counter-attack somewhat non-plussed Miss Skinner. "I don't know, I'm sure."

"Neither do I," continued the redoubtable Peppercorn; "I've often wondered."

"I believe Miss Fallowfield is very, very rich," exclaimed the little dress-maker. "I've heard it said that she has a million of money!"

"And I call it a great shame for a fortune like that to be given to one woman," quoth the revolutionary post-mistress. "I don't wish to speak irreverently, but I sometimes find it difficult to reconcile the enormous fortunes which the Almighty bestows upon certain quite unworthy persons, with my idea of justice."

"Well," replied the hostess, "He didn't make that mistake in your case, Emma Skinner, so you needn't be led into free-thinking on that score."

"Mrs. Sprott is late this afternoon," remarked the gentle Mrs. Paicey.

"And no wonder," retorted Mrs. Peppercorn; "you'd be late if you were so busy attending to other people's affairs that you hadn't time to look after your own. Not that I've any cause to grumble, however, for the later she is the better I'm pleased; and I should be most pleased of all if she didn't come till the Dorcas-meeting was over."

"I wish she hadn't introduced this custom of reading aloud at the Dorcas," sighed Mrs. Paicey; "it seems to confuse you and take your mind off your work as it were. I haven't the mind to take in a gusset and a history-book at once, and I don't pretend to it; but I used to enjoy the bit of talk at the Dorcas more than anything; that and Mrs. Peppercorn's tea," she added politely. "I'm always one more for talk



"How often have I tried to convince you that it is far better to try and improve our minds by reading aloud?" p. 80.

than reading; you seem to get so much more information out of it, as you might say."

"Reading is the only recreation for cultured spirits," said Miss Skinner; "I dote upon it myself."

Little Miss Tovey agreed with her. She was one of those clinging spirits who always agree with everybody. "It is indeed, Miss Skinner, dear, and so delightful to lose oneself in an imaginary world."

"I was not referring to the perusal of novels when I remarked that I doted upon reading. I meant something more broadening to the mind than mere fiction. Though I must admit that there is much to be learnt from the modern novel, which as a rule grapples with a problem instead of merely telling a story, as its benighted predecessors used to do. Yes; there is much that is broadening in the modern novel."

"There is often much that is too broad," said Mrs. Peppercorn, "judging from what I've seen my girls get out of the circulating libraries."

"Still it opens the mind of the reader."

"So it does, Miss Skinner, and to a good deal that had better have been left shut."

"The worst of reading aloud at a Dorcas-meeting," remarked Miss Tovey, "is that as a rule it makes you cry, so that you can't see to thread your needle, and that seems to waste time so. Yet I do feel it wouldn't be right to read a story at a Dorcas that didn't make you cry—it would seem almost like Sabbath-breaking."

"Why not read aloud a book that will make you laugh?" suggested the advanced Miss Skinner.

But this was too much even for gentle Mrs. Paicey. "Oh! no, Miss Skinner; surely not at a sewing-party, which is almost a religious service, as you might say."

"But you would talk about things that make you laugh at a sewing-party, so why not read about them?"

"Because talking and reading are quite different, Emma Skinner," Mrs. Peppercorn hastened to explain. "For instance, I see no harm in Peppercorn's talking a bit of politics on a Sunday so long as he don't expect me to listen to such rubbish—none at all. But if I caught him reading a newspaper on a Sunday—my word! I'd pop it behind the fire in pretty quick time, and give him a word of a sort into the bargain."

"But a sewing-party is not a Sunday," objected Miss Skinner.

"Perhaps not exactly," replied Mrs. Paicey; "but it is something of the same nature, as you might say."

Here Mrs. Peppercorn pronounced judgment. "I quite agree with Mrs. Sprott that a Dorcas-meeting is not the place for gossip; as a matter of fact, I don't know what place is, for gossip is a thing of which I don't approve, and it is no use pretending that I do. But a bit of pleasant chat is quite a different thing, and does one a lot more good than those dry old books that Mrs. Sprott is so fond of ramming down our throats."

"Mrs. Tibbets used to gossip something awful at the sewing-parties last winter, as it were," remarked Mrs. Paicey.

"That she did; it quite disgusted me," agreed Mrs. Peppercorn.

"And me," added Mrs. Paicey.

"And Mrs. Sprott herself isn't above a bit of gossip sometimes." It was Miss Skinner who spoke.

The lady of the house agreed with her with unctious. "You're right there, Emma Skinner, you're right there; you never spoke a truer word in your life; and it is not always charitable gossip either. That woman is finding fault with her neighbours and putting them straight from morning till night. For my part, I don't think such behaviour is Christian, let alone right. We all know what Saint James said about the religion of those people that didn't bridle their tongues; he had no patience with it whatsoever. And it is my opinion that Mrs. Sprott was just the kind of body that Saint James had in his mind's eye when he wrote that bit."

"Her and Mrs. Tibbets," suggested Mrs. Paicey.

"Yes, Mrs. Paicey, that is so; though I still hold that Mrs. Sprott is the worst of the two. She couldn't keep clear of her neighbours' affairs, no, not if you was to crown her. And what business is it of hers what other people do or leave undone, I should like to know? I've no patience with folks who keep passing their remarks on things that don't concern them."

"No, nor have I, Mrs. Peppercorn; and as for Paicey, he can't stand it. He won't allow gossip at any price, won't Paicey. 'Mind your business,' he says, 'and leave other folks to mind theirs; and if they do anything out of the common, Mary Ann, just you tell me about it, and I'll see if I can't explain it.'"

"That reminds me," Miss Tovey remarked, "that a little bird has whispered to me that Mr. Crabbe, of Appleton Farm, is paying his respects to Mrs. Tibbets."

The needle dropped from Mrs. Peppercorn's fingers. "You don't say so, Amelia Tovey—and his wife hardly cold in her grave yet!"

Well, that's the uptake of everything! And Mrs. Tibbets, who has been a widow for fifteen years, and ought to know better by this time! I've a great mind to go and tell her what a fool she is making of herself."

"Some folks don't know when they are well off," sighed Mrs. Mawer.

"But they know fast enough when other people are," added Mrs. Peppercorn, "and feather their own nests accordingly."

"I think if Mr. Crabbe intends to marry again, he might have selected a more suitable life-companion than Mrs. Tibbets." Miss Skinner spoke in quite a huffy tone of voice.

Mrs. Peppercorn sniffed contemptuously. She never paid any attention to the dicta of an unmarried woman. "But he doesn't want a life-companion, as it happens; a life-insurance is more in his line."

"I should think the poor man must have felt terribly lonely ever since his dear wife was taken from him," Miss Tovey chimed in.

"That's just the sort of thing you would think, Amelia; and it isn't worth thinking—much less saying."

"But, Mrs. Peppercorn, dear, any man—even the most callous—must miss the woman that has been his helpmeet for over thirty years."

"You didn't know Mrs. Crabbe, Amelia; that is plain."

"No, Mrs. Peppercorn, I had not that pleasure."

"Then don't talk about what you don't know about, Amelia Tovey; it's a waste of time."

Poor Miss Tovey bit her thread in humiliated silence, and subsided.

"I must tell Paicey about this; he'll be rare and interested-like, will Paicey. Over and over again he has said to me, 'Mary Ann,' says he, 'mark my words: some designing woman will get hold of that old gossiping fool for the money, and she'll talk his hind legs off and leave her savings to her own people in the end.' Oh, but he can't stand gossip at any price, can't Paicey; and Mrs. Tibbets is fairly more than he can stomach." And Mrs. Paicey purred with pleasure at having so delectable a piece of news wherewith to regale her lord and master upon her return to her own hearth.

"I can't think why Mrs. Tibbets isn't here to-day," said Mrs. Mawer; "she used to be such a regular attendant at the Dorcas. I trust she has had no bad news, nor any sudden stroke of illness that will carry her off sudden-like."

"She always looks strong enough, if looks count for anything."

"So she does, Mrs. Peppercorn, so she does; but appearances are very deceptive, especially in the case of stout persons. I always think

that stout people, such as yourself, for instance, and Mrs. Tibbets, are the first to go off if anything ails them. Here to-day and gone to-morrow, that's the way with them stout figures." And Mrs. Mawer sighed like a furnace.

But Miss Skinner took a more hopeful view of the situation. "I met Mrs. Tibbets on her way to the station as I came here, and she looked all right."

At this Mrs. Mawer fairly groaned. "Looks are nothing in the case of stout people. In fact, the stronger they look the sooner they're gone."

Mrs. Peppercorn laid down her work that she might think the more profoundly. "I wonder what that means? There's something behind that! It isn't like Mrs. Tibbets to go to town, especially on a Monday afternoon. I must get to the bottom of this. What had she got on, Emma Skinner?"

"I didn't particularly notice; something red and yellow on her head, I think, and dark clothes. But I never am one to notice dress much; I don't go in for being fashionable." A somewhat superfluous statement on Miss Skinner's part.

"Well, I never! Her Sunday bonnet! It's the one that had lilies and forget-me-nots all the summer, and she's just had it done up and made seasonable with corn and nasturtiums. It is very unlike Mrs. Tibbets to wear her Sunday bonnet on a Monday afternoon; and when I see a Sunday bonnet on a Monday afternoon I know there's something behind it!" And Mrs. Peppercorn's face stiffened with determination to solve the mystery.

At this juncture a diversion was made by the arrival of "the quality," in the form of Mrs. Sprott and Mrs. Higginson.

Mrs. Higginson, the wife of a retired manufacturer of boots and shoes, was a thin, old-maidish looking woman with a passion for gentility; but Mrs. Sprott, the better half of Timothy Sprott, head clerk in the legal firm of Duncan and Somers, was of another kidney altogether. Mrs. Higginson's claim to gentility was based upon her deceased father, whom she always described as "a professional man," and referred to as "the doctor." As a matter of fact, this worthy gentleman had been a retail chemist in the days of his flesh; but those days were so remote, and his daughter's memory so imaginative, that time and filial enthusiasm had succeeded in bestowing upon him the degree of M.D. Mrs. Sprott, on the contrary, owned no special pride of ancestry. Her claim to distinction—after the manner of the mother of the Gracchi—rested in her only child, Theophilus, who had (according to his mother's notions) secured high rank in this world and

the next by taking Holy Orders. The priesthood of Theophilus had completely turned his mother's head. It not only caused her to regard herself as on a social par with that section of society which she described as "the county"; it also led her to insist upon offering up the closing Collect at the weekly Dorcas-meeting, in the absence of the vicar, as if—in some strange and occult fashion—Apostolic succession were retrospective, and conferred its peculiar grace upon the mothers of the clergy.

Mrs. Sprott had been abundantly baptised with an outpouring of the missionary spirit; that is to say, she regarded herself as specially called to correct the faults and redress the wrongs of her neighbours; and when the spirit of knight-errantry finds a lodging in the breast of a middle-aged female, woe betide everybody all round! She was, moreover, an aggressive woman. Everything about her was aggressive. Her black silk dress was of that stiff, unbending nature which seems specially ordained to stand alone; her black velvet mantle was trimmed with a fringe of bugles which made a noise when she moved like the muttering of trees before a storm; and her bonnet was ablaze with purple roses and yellow forget-me-nots, thereby teaching Nature a lesson as to the colours in which those flowers ought originally to have been designed.

"I fear we are rather late," exclaimed this excellent woman as she sat down in her accustomed place and unfastened the bundle of unbleached calico wherein her own particular chemise was enshrined; "but I was hindered by having to call at Mrs. Barker's on the way to superintend the food that she is giving to her youngest child."

"Not at all, not at all," replied the hostess with dangerous suavity; "you are in good time for tea, Mrs. Sprott, very good time." There was chronic warfare between Mrs. Sprott and the house of Peppercorn.

"Talking of children reminds me," continued Mrs. Sprott, "that your baby is looking very ill, Mrs. Paicey. What age is it now?"

"Eleven months," replied Mrs. Paicey, with a quiver of maternal anguish. Yet Mrs. Sprott, to do her justice, had no intention of being deliberately cruel—she merely wished to prove to Mrs. Paicey how much better in health the youthful Paiceys would be if she (Mrs. Sprott) were consulted as to their up-bringing.

"Eleven months; it looks more like a baby of eleven weeks! What do you feed it on?"

"Framley's food. He has seemed to take to it, as it were, and to digest it."

"I don't approve of Framley's food. I brought up my Theophilus on tops-and-bottoms."

"So I should have supposed from the looks of him," interjected Mrs. Peppercorn.

Mrs. Sprott felt that there was battle in the air, though she could not lay her finger upon it. Mrs. Peppercorn had said nothing, in so many words, derogatory to tops-and-bottoms, yet there was something in the tone of her voice which gave the impression that she did not consider them a desirable food.

"I did not catch your meaning, Mrs. Peppercorn."

"Nothing to catch, Mrs. Sprott, I'm sure. You tell us that Mr. Theophilus was brought up on tops-and-bottoms, and I pass the remark that he looks like it. And if he looks like what he is, there's surely nothing to be surprised at in that. It would be more surprising if it was the other way."

Again Mrs. Sprott scented battle; and this time she took refuge in flight. "Has anyone begun the reading aloud?" she asked.

"Not that I've noticed," the hostess replied; "but then I'm not one to attend much to reading aloud, I admit."

"But, Mrs. Peppercorn, how often have I tried to convince you that it is far better to try and improve our minds by reading aloud an instructive book at the sewing-parties than to waste our time in ill-natured and foolish gossip?"

"By all means, Mrs. Sprott; and if you feel tempted that way you do right to close your lips, so to speak, by reading aloud; but ill-natured and foolish gossip is no temptation to me, and it is no use my pretending that it is."

"Nevertheless, Mrs. Peppercorn," Mrs. Sprott continued, "you must see that even harmless conversation may speedily degenerate into gossip if it is not held in check."

"Certainly—with some people."

"When we get into the habit of not thinking before we speak, it is remarkable how many unwise and unkind things we say—and without any intention of being unwise or unkind either," said the village Mentor.

"All the same," persisted Mrs. Peppercorn, "it's a mistake to get into the habit of thinking before you speak; it nearly always ends in leaving something unsaid which it would have done somebody a power of good to hear."

Poor Mrs. Paicey took no part in this discussion; all the life had been taken out of her by Mrs. Sprott's remark about her baby. But Mrs. Higginson joined in: "Surely, Mrs. Peppercorn, there are occasions when it is better to think before one speaks, say when one is angry, for instance, and one's equanimity is ruffled. You would never scold anyone when you were in a temper, would you?"

"Always; it's the time when I scold best. I don't think of half such good things after I've cooled down a bit. Why, if I don't scold Peppercorn in the very nick of time when I'm put out with him, I get thinking what a well-set-up man he is, and what a pleasant face he's got, and all sorts of soft thoughts, till in the end he don't get scolded at all."

"And think what a good thing that is, Mrs. Peppercorn, dear," murmured Miss Tovey.

"Excuse me, Amelia, but you haven't been married to Peppercorn these thirty years—I have."

Here Mrs. Mawer indulged in a stupendous sigh. "It was all very well, Mrs. Peppercorn, while your husband was young—very well indeed; but when folks get to his age you never know that you mayn't be speaking to them for the last time, those big, fine men getting carried off so sudden-like just when they seem at their best. And then how sad for the last words between you to be the words of anger!"

"I think perhaps I had better begin the reading aloud," remarked Mrs. Sprott, laying down her sewing and taking a book out of her hand-bag. "I have brought 'The History of the Prayer Book' to read to you this time, as last week we finished 'The Lives of the Minor Prophets.' I feel sure you will all be interested to learn how our beloved Prayer Book was originally composed."

Mrs. Peppercorn shook her head with decision. "I never care to know how things are made—never. I remember once seeing how chocolate was made at an exhibition, and I've never been able to touch the filthy stuff since."

"But surely, Mrs. Peppercorn," Mrs. Sprott persisted, "our dear Prayer Book is quite a different thing from mere chocolate? You must feel an interest in its history—and you the wife of a churchwarden! I consider the Prayer Book the backbone of our English Church."

This set Mrs. Peppercorn's own back up more than ever. It never failed to exasperate her when Mrs. Sprott—by right of a vested interest in Theophilus—spoke of the Church as her private preserve. "It may be the backbone of the English Church," she retorted, "but that's no reason that I can see for wanting to know how it was made. For my part I consider the clergy the backbone of the English Church, and I respect them accordingly, and some more than others; but I don't feel the least interest in knowing whether they were brought up on Framley's food or tops-and-bottoms, and it's no use pretending that I do."

This was a master-stroke, and Mrs. Sprott felt it so. She had no retort ready, so "her bugles sang truce" (as they did in the poem),

and, with a preliminary shake of her mantle, she opened her book.

But before she had time to begin, Miss Skinner remarked, "Talking of clergymen, I wonder who Miss Fallowfield will appoint vicar of Dinglewood in the Reverend Hanson's place."

"And so do I," echoed Mrs. Higginson. "It is indeed a grave responsibility to select the shepherd of so large a flock as the one of which we are members. I remember my dear papa, the doctor, used to say, 'The head of the Church in every parish is the vicar,' and so indeed it is." The doctor's daughter was very much addicted to quoting the most ordinary and obvious platitudes uttered by the departed chemist as if they were the choicest epigrams and epitomes of wisdom.

"What this parish really wants," announced Mrs. Sprott, "is a young and vigorous man, unhampered as yet by the cares and responsibilities of married life."

"I thought as much," ejaculated the lady of the house.

"As much as what, Mrs. Peppercorn?" It was Miss Tovey who spoke, in her usual thirst for information.

"That what this parish really wants is a young man with no wife and less experience," was the dark answer.

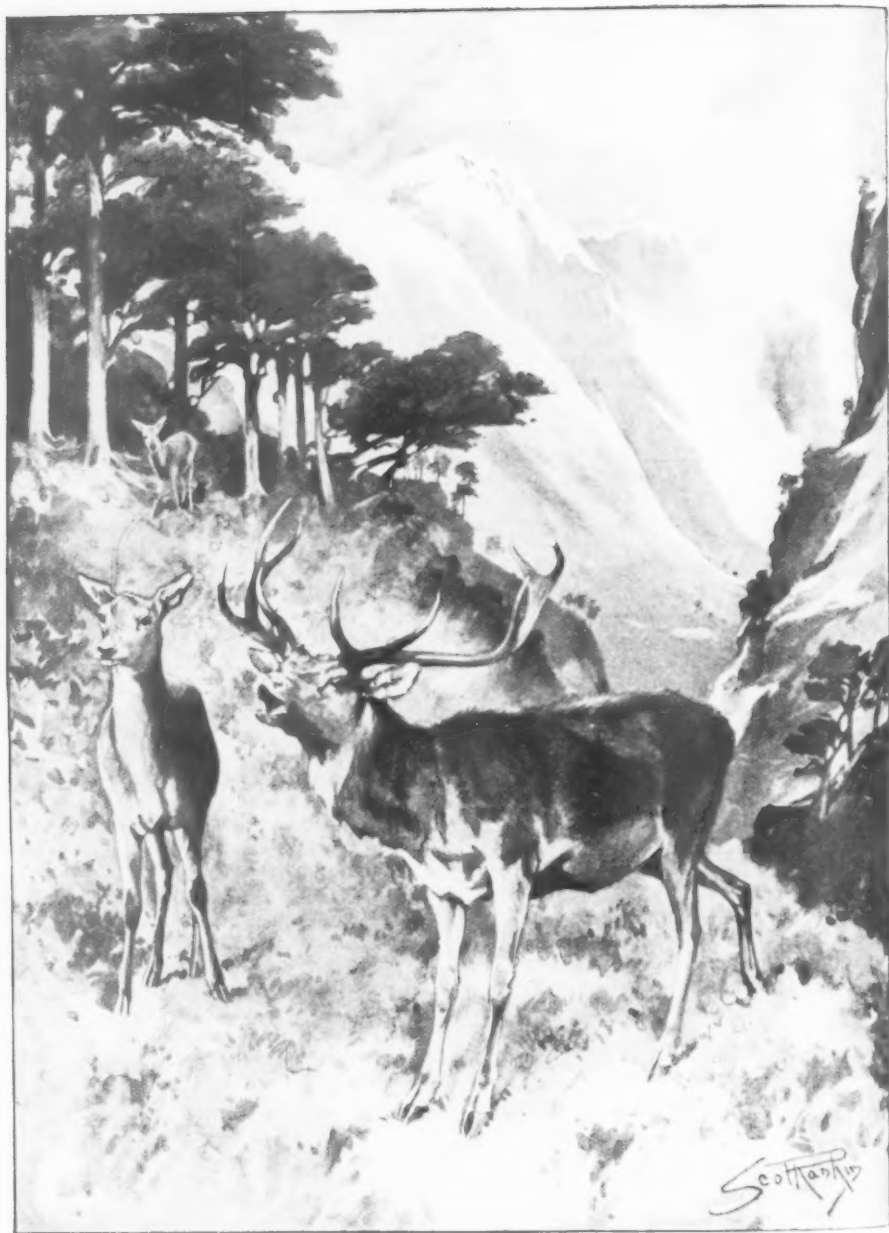
Mrs. Sprott thought fit to take this statement literally. "That is quite true, Mrs. Peppercorn, and I only trust that Miss Fallowfield will see it in the same light as we do. But when I say an unmarried man, I do not mean a man altogether unhelped by feminine influence. A successful parish priest, even if still single, should always have a woman at his elbow—a mother or a sister—to counsel him."

Again Mrs. Peppercorn apparently agreed with her enemy. "And he is bound to get them. No man with female relatives has any cause to go wrong for want of a bit of advice."

"Yes," added Mrs. Sprott, once more opening "The History of the Prayer Book"; "what Dinglewood requires for its spiritual needs is a young and earnest unmarried clergyman, with some capable woman always at his side; a man full of the enthusiasm and single-mindedness of youth, who has been brought up by wise and pious parents."

"Upon tops-and-bottoms," murmured Mrs. Peppercorn; but the mother of Theophilus was too wise to appear to hear her, and proceeded to delve among the foundations of the Anglican Prayer Book until it was time for her to offer up her closing Collect and bring the sewing-meeting to an end.

[END OF CHAPTER ONE.]



RED STAG ON THE CARRNGORM RANGE

(Drawn by Scott Rankin.)

ON OUTPOST DUTY.

By Olive Christian Malvery.



VERY likely it was the bonny face peeping out under the hideous poke bonnet of blue, adorned with the red badge of the Salvation Army, that won me to an interest in the peculiar work the owner was engaged in. She was

standing where moving streams of London traffic made crossing impossible, and we waited on an island, clinging to the lamp post to keep our balance, for the refugees were crowded thick. She raised her head, and a sudden smile illuminated her freckled face. My heart went out to her instantly—she looked so bright and wholesome—and, as the girls say down Hoxton way, “we spoke.”

She told me, as we rolled Citywards on the top of a penny ‘bus, that she had been into the country on “exchange duty,” another sister taking her place for three weeks on “outpost.” She had enjoyed her holiday, if holiday it might be called, considering that she was at work the whole time, but it was the change into the pure air, and a sight of the trees and grass she had revelled in, and now she returned to the great City fresh as a country flower, and as good to meet. She laughed merrily when I inquired innocently as to the meaning of “outpost duty” and “slum sister,” and other unfamiliar expressions she used, and said:

“Why, sister, I think you’d better come along with me to my room, and you’ll find out for yourself what it all means.”

I was not able just then to accompany her, but before we reached Liverpool Street she had given me her address, and I had promised to meet her some day at a place named by her not far from where her work lay.

“As yet,” she said, “we have not gone to live exactly at the worst spot, but Lieutenant Francis and I mean to get there soon.”

Some months after this meeting, when my heart was sore from much contact with poverty and misery, and I was burning not only to touch “the heart of things,” but to see some way out of the awful slough of

crime and misery for the miserable creatures I had been travelling among. I thought in my indignation and despair of Captain Molly, and wrote claiming her promise to show me “light in dark places.” After the delay of a few days I received her answer, asking me to meet her at the Barracks. I went.

“Well, I’m just as glad as can be to see you. I thought you had forgotten,” she said. “But are you sure, my dear, you realise what you are undertaking? It isn’t a pleasant place for strangers where I live.”

“I am not afraid,” I said. “If you can live there, I can visit there.”

“It isn’t quite the same thing,” she replied. “Besides, you see, my uniform’s a protection.”

“If I come with you I shall wear a uniform also, if you will let me.”

She looked dubious. “Sit down,” she said, “and we’ll talk and pray over it.”

We were in a little bare room. A picture of the Divine Master praying in the Garden hung on the whitewashed wall. The face was lifted to Heaven, and the yearning look in the eyes moved one to pity for a love that could so hunger for the outcast and the needy.

“Can you understand it?” said Captain Molly.

“I think so,” I answered quietly. “It seems so sorrowful so many human creatures should be wasted.”

She came and put her hand on my shoulder.

“Come, if you feel like that.”

“The worst street in London?”

“I don’t know,” said Captain Molly, as we walked towards her “post” some days afterwards, both of us wearing the sombre dress of “Soldiers of Salvation,” “that it really is the worst street in London, but about here the police and others say it is, and I don’t think it would be easy to find its equal anywhere else.”

We were threading our way through crowds in a narrow street flanked by barrows and coster stalls. I noticed the folk made way for us as we went, and Captain Molly acknowledged all courtesies with a word or smile. And by-and-by we came to a dingy court which seemed a veritable plague spot, the haunt, as I afterwards learnt, of thieves and bad characters. And this was Green Arbour Court!

"And why," I asked my companion, "do they call it Green Arbour Court?"

She smiled a trifle sadly.

"The authority who christened it must have been an ironical man and named it for its oppositeness to its title; or maybe," she said slowly, "once it was green and good, even here."

One might imagine the place, from its name, a spot redolent of flowers and melodious with song, instead of being, as it was, a dirty, dark, insanitary *cul de sac*, with a death rate four times as high as any street in its immediate neighbourhood. A slum shunned by all but the very lowest. A modern Alsatia. A close borough of black-guardism, visited by the police only at rare intervals, and then in couples. Practically ignored by the sanitary authorities, excepting on the occasions when the ambulance takes away one of its inhabitants, a victim, perhaps, to diphtheria or some other infectious horror, born in the vile miasma arising from its filth and uncleanness.

For very obvious reasons, it is impossible for me to do more than barely indicate the exact locality of this wretched slum.

It is situated in the East-End of London, and its only entrance leads from a well-known thoroughfare. The houses are dilapidated to such a degree that one wonders how they manage to keep erect. The walls may almost be seen to totter, the staircases are broken to a dangerous degree, while paint on the doors and paper on the walls have been unknown within the present generation of inhabitants.

It was on a warm September evening that I first entered this narrow paved court. It seemed as if I had come into an oven. The sun had beaten on the houses all day, and, owing to there being no back ventilation whatever, the small rooms had become absolutely unbearable to the inhabitants. The heat had driven nearly every inmate out of doors. Those who were not in the public-house that stood on one side of the entrance to the court were sitting on the doorsteps or pavement in front of the houses. Quarrelsome, hot, dirty, and semi-naked children were crawling about, or lolling on the hard stones, and every corner seemed alive; so much so, that I feared I should have to step on someone if I wished to pass up the court at all. Little wonder that the place echoed with bad language and words not of the gentlest.

"Do you really live here?" I asked of Captain Molly.

"Surely," she said, and I followed her obediently up the rickety stairway of a house. At the third storey we halted on the tiny landing, and I noticed it was the only clean spot we had passed since entering the court. Captain Molly took a key from her pocket, and we entered her "station." She had two rooms opening into each other. The matchboarding between them was painted a pretty green and hung with lovely prints in reed frames. I noticed they were fixed on with brass nails.

"My sister gave these to me," said Captain Molly, mentioning a name well known in London society. There was no covering on the floor, but it was enamelled a pretty dark brown; the chairs were enamelled in green to match the partition, and the table was brown like the floor. There was a big, rough, green jar of growing ferns in the window, and a blackbird in a cage hung there also.

We went into the little bedroom. It was painted in dark blue, and a narrow truckle bed and one small trunk were the chief pieces of furniture. Besides a tall, rush-bottomed chair was a tiny slip of carpet. A little table held a few books, and on the wall, above a small shelf, hung a six-inch looking-glass, "just to show if the helmet's on straight," laughed Captain Molly.

"I pay six shillings a week for this place," said Captain Molly, "and am better provided with room than any of my neighbours."

The remembrance of my first night in that evil spot will stay with me always. We went out to a meeting that evening, and returned eager to rest. But all through the night it was a pandemonium.

There were horrid shouts and oaths, and sometimes a woman's scream or the cry of a terrified child broke through the babel of noise. About three o'clock a knock came to our door. Captain Molly got up. A man stood outside, haggard and awful looking.

"My gal's dying out there," he said.

On the steps of one of the houses, propped against the wall, sat a wasted girl panting for breath. At Captain Molly's command the man carried her up to our room; we laid a blanket on the floor and bathed her face with cold water; it was all marred and disfigured with marks of many battles. Once she spoke in broken gasps:

"Git 'old o' Tom; 'e ain't a bad lot."

The man heard and bent down. The girl was dead.

Remembering her words, Tom let Captain Molly "git 'old" of him, and became a valued helper and guide.

For a time I hung on to Captain Molly's skirts, till gradually I grew more familiar with the place and acquainted with some of our neighbours.

One of the first persons I came to know in the house was a woman who occupied, with several other persons and a number of children, a room on the next landing to ours. One night I had stumbled over her in the dark, when she was lying in a drunken sleep on the stairs near our room. At first I thought she was ill, and fetched a light to see how I could help her. But I soon discovered that she was insensibly drunk, also that she had received a fall, and had badly cut her forehead. There was quite a pool of blood where she lay. Making a bandage by tearing up one of the towels, I first bathed, and then bound up, the wound; then, getting assistance, I had her taken to her room. Through this act of common duty an acquaintanceship sprang up between us, from which I gathered a great deal of knowledge indeed. From her I learned much of the habits of our neighbours—of course, many things she told me would be utterly impossible to relate, and can only here be hinted at. Most of the men in the house, I was told, were "hooks," or "dead bents," as she called common thieves. Nearly all of them had at some period of their lives "done time"—that is, had been in gaol. Several had been flogged in prison for committing "robbery with violence."

Crimes of the very worst description were openly and sympathetically discussed, and one could not help wondering why the authorities allow such a hotbed of sin to exist. But, I suppose, even thieves must live somewhere, and perhaps it is thought best that they should congregate in a colony where they can be, as it were, under the eye of the police, who often visited this locality at night in order to find, if possible, some notorious criminal. This the people themselves call "turning them over."

Not an individual in the place appeared to earn an honest livelihood. Boys started off in the morning in gangs, like wolves in search of prey. Men went into the country to "do jobs," which did not mean, as one might be led to believe, some respectable employment, but was the term applied to committing some well-planned crime, generally financed by one of the "heads," as these master criminals are called. Young



(Photo: Mayne, Putney.)

OLIVE CHRISTIAN MALVERY AND HER LITTLE DAUGHTER.

and old, feeble and strong, all were engaged in this evil work. The tiniest boys and girls crawled into shops "after the box," as they called stealing tills, a class of robbery very much inflicted on, and causing much annoyance to, the small shopkeepers of the neighbourhood. The youths and young women infested the dark thoroughfares on the look-out for helpless women or drunken "mugs," as they called their victims, to beat and rob them; while the greybeards of this banditti planned burglaries and crimes of a more daring or dastardly nature.

It was in this neighbourhood that I first

came into actual contact with people who openly admitted, at least one to another, that they were thieves and vagabonds. There I heard criminal exploits and nefarious projects discussed as calmly and quietly as my more respectable friends discuss their daily business. Of course, it required a vast amount of patience and something of tact to gain their confidence, and Captain Molly's friendship for me was a guarantee of my faith.

Then, too, little acts of common charity, assistance in case of accident, advice in illness, all these things helped us.

Honour amongst thieves obtains to a much greater extent than one would suppose. Low as these people are, there is a viler being—the police-paid spy, often a thief himself, who lives with, and on, his companions in crime, and then betrays them. These contemptible mouchards are known as "copper's narks." They are not officially recognised, of course, but they are great factors in the discovery of crime and criminals, and, from the point of view of law and order, must be considered useful. But the arm of the law is not long enough to reach these evildoers, and drag them into respectability; nor is it strong enough to sweep them and their rat-holes away, and force them to decent living. It is the "soldiers" on "outpost duty," the "slum sisters," who here are stronger than the law, and are instrumental in winning many a young life from criminality. I also discovered that, vile and cruel as many of these people were, some sparks of humanity were left in most of them, and I cannot believe that they were utterly and wholly lost.

I verily believe that, if some method could be found by which they could be approached in a common-sense and kindly fashion, the children at least could be educated out of their criminal ways. It is not enough that here and there a "slum sister" carries the torch of civilisation and Christianity among them. Earnest persons should make it their business to get into actual daily contact with this class. This could be done by forming small committees, who might occupy rooms in the very centres of these hotbeds of crime.

Much good and useful work could be done from these centres: advice in time of need, medical and surgical assistance, organised charity, enforcement of the Public Health Acts, and a hundred and one other useful duties which would be bound to have a good effect on the lives of the people watched over.

I know that there are many missions

besides the Salvation Army doing good and useful work, but I am afraid that most of the effort is spent upon that well-earned-for class, "the deserving poor." My plea is for the undeserving criminal, and the class of work that I should like to see further extended is that done by the "slum sisters" of the Salvation Army in such places as I have described.

The Public Health (London) Act (54 and 55 Vict., c. 76) inflicts penalties in respect to having premises in a state dangerous to health, also in the matter of overcrowding. But who is there to enforce this law? Most of the houses had no street doors, the stairs were broken and unsafe, and in many cases a piece of rope took the place of a hand-rail.

How often in the gathering dusk Captain Molly would go down to the end of the court opposite the public-house, and there stand with face upraised and sing holy words that seemed to purify the tainted air! Once a girl came by, and, acting on some strange vile impulse, threw a rotten orange at the Captain; it struck her full in the chest and spattered over her gown. She turned to the girl with "You poor child!" The creature yelled out a horrible oath, and rushed laughing down the street. The meeting went on. Captain Molly spoke wonderful words to the strange, half-human creatures round her. That night, about twelve o'clock, there was a knocking at the door. Captain Molly opened it, and brought in the girl who had thrown the orange. She was covered with blood and dirt, and trembled and sobbed violently. After a while we learnt her trouble. Her "bloke" had "bashed" her for being unsuccessful in picking pockets at the tram terminus, and as he had administered his chastisement in public the police had captured him and walked him off to the cells. He had split open one policeman's head, so his sentence was sure to be a severe one. Poor "Red Meg," as the girl was called, was in great distress. In her sore and forlorn condition she came to Captain Molly. The last I heard of her was that she was serving in a country bootshop, and was much valued by her employers. She was waiting and praying for a "change of heart for her bloke," and dividing her spare pence between the Salvation Army Prison Mission and a little hoard she was gathering to make a home when he was released. Captain Molly will take care he is met at the prison gate and helped to a new life, if he so wishes.

CONVERSATION CORNER.

Conducted by the Editor.

The King's Christmas.

NEARLY every Christmas in the King's life since he was married has been spent at Sandringham, and once again it is the intention of His Majesty to gather around him a family party at this season of the year, when most people try to assemble in their own homes. The late Prince Consort was practically responsible for introducing into this country the Christmas tree, borrowing the idea from his native land of Germany. At Sandringham the King and Queen usually have a Christmas tree for the benefit of the younger generation, and in addition they send away a very large number of Christmas gifts. Queen Alexandra has a special design for her Christmas card each year, and it is always treasured by all whom the honours with this greeting.



A Beautiful Will.

ONE of the most beautiful wills ever written is that of Charles Lownsbury, an American gentleman, who died lately. He was a man of no property, yet he bequeathed, from a heart overflowing with love and kindness, that which was priceless. Here are some of his quaintly expressed bequests:

"Item: I give to good fathers and mothers, in trust for their children, all good little words of praise and encouragement, and all quaint pet names and endearments.

"Item: I leave to children inclusively, all and every, the flowers of the fields and the blossoms of the woods, with the right to play among them freely according to the customs of children, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. And I leave the children the long, long days to be merry in, in a thousand ways, and the night and the moon and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at.

"Item: I devise to boys jointly all the useful idle fields and commons where ball may be played; all pleasant waters where one may swim;

and all streams and ponds where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate; and all meadows with the clover blossoms and butterflies thereof, the woods and their appurtenances, the squirrels and birds, and echoes and strange noises; and I give to said boys each his own place at the fireside at night; with all pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance and without any encumbrance of care."

White as Snow.

DURING its thirty odd years of activity the Mission to Lepers in India and the East has fully justified its existence. At no time in its history has the look-out been more promising than it is at present, and never has the need for continued support from the sympathetic public been greater. In its last report the Mission states that its expenditure has amounted to the huge sum of £22,800. The Society now maintains no fewer than fifty asylums for lepers and twenty-two homes for their untainted children. One can only hope that the appeal for further assistance will not fall upon deaf ears.



KING EDWARD GOING TO CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

"The Quiver" Good Conduct Medals.

WE have pleasure in presenting our readers this month with portraits of three winners of "The Quiver" Good Conduct Medal. The little girl is Miss Lucy Phoebe Florence Moverly, a twelve year old inmate of the Reedham Orphanage, Purley, Surrey. Miss Clements, the head-mistress, says that Lucy has been a member of the "Reedham family" for the last four years. She has endeared herself to her fellow-scholars by the sweetness of her temper, and to her teachers by her constant efforts to do her best in class. Lucy is a sufferer from frequent attacks of rheumatism, and this prevents her taking part in the romping games of her stronger school-mates; but she is always ready for a little quiet fun.



Reedham Boy Medallist.

THE winner of the boys' medal is James Ley, aged fourteen, who is also one of the "Reedham family." He has well earned the prize, as he has full conduct marks for a year, with a special bonus for a particularly



(Photo: W. Parsons)

LUCY PHOEBE FLORENCE MOVERLY.

meritorious act in upholding the tone and honour of the school. James is a bright, happy lad, full of fun, and always smiling. He is a manly boy, a fine cricketer, very popular both with the staff and with his school-fellows. He only missed by a few votes the "kindness prize" which is annually awarded by the boys themselves.



SERGT. JONES, OF THE GORDON BOYS' HOME, A "QUIVER" MEDALLIST.

The Gordon Boys' Home.

THE winner of the medal at the Gordon Boys' Home is Sergeant Jones, whose portrait we give on this page. He had an excellent record, and we wish him every success in the future. The Gordon Boys' Home is accomplishing a splendid work well deserving the sympathy of our readers.



Livingstone Work at Home.

"IF I were not a missionary to Africa," said Dr. Livingstone, on his last visit to English shores, "I would be a missionary to the poor of London." It is many years since these words were spoken, but the need for missionary effort in the metropolis is as great, if not greater, than it was a generation ago. One of the most enterprising institutions which aims at the care of the London poor is the London Medical Mission, the centre of whose activity is in the once fashionable district of St. Giles, the quarter which in later years became a hotbed of crime and poverty. Comfort for the body and consolation for the mind are supplied by missionary workers, and all kinds of gifts whether of money, old and new clothing, or even empty medicine bottles, are acceptable. Two of the most important phases of the Mission work is the maintaining of the Holi-

day House and Convalescent Home. In the Convalescent Home the cost for each patient is 10s. a week, and a fortnight's residence is usually necessary in each case. The Holiday House is intended for the poor little children, the first batch of whom are sent off early in May. Five shillings supports a child for one week, excluding the shilling railway fare. At the present time the holiday season is over, but our readers could not do better than send a small contribution to the London Medical Mission, Sherris Gardens, Endell Street, W.C., against the bright summer time when it will be once more possible to send the little ones to the green fields.



Liquid Ruin and Sorrow.

WE notice in the quarterly record of the McAll Mission in France that a vigorous protest is being made against the inroads which alcohol is making in that country. There is an absolute necessity for all to do their utmost to stop this terrible evil. The spread of the awful habit of absinthe drinking is shown by the fact that in the last twenty years its consumption



(Photo: W. Parsons)

JAMES LEY

has increased from one million gallons to four and a half million gallons every year. Dr. Roux, the head of the Pasteur Institute, says: "It is perfectly clear to everyone that absinthe is heaping up ruin and sorrow in France, and that to prevent its fabrication is a work of humanity and of patriotism."

Westminster Choir Boys.

"LUCKY DOGS!" This everyday exclamation is often used in regard to the choristers of Westminster Abbey. Youngsters who are successful in passing the keen, critical ear of Sir Frederick Bridge, the celebrated organist of the Abbey, are assured of a good start in life, as well as a happy boyhood. Recruited from all parts of the British Isles, the boys are boarded at the Choir House, Westminster, where their general education is looked after by the Rev. R. Carver Blackmore and his assistant. Although the choristers work hard, yet they have their full share of recreation. During the winter months football is much indulged in, and the boys with the sweet voices show that their capabilities do not end with singing. The chief sorrow of the youngsters comes when their voices break and they have to leave the choir. However, the grief is to a certain extent assuaged by a handsome present from the Dean, who often uses his great influence to give the boys a good start in the race of life. If we searched

through the history of singing we should find that many famous singers began their careers at Westminster.

Some Plans for 1908.

I AM glad to announce that a very interesting article giving some stories of Gipsy Smith's work in



(Photo: Pictorial Agency.)

GIPSY SMITH.

America will be one of the features of our January Number. The great evangelist held several missions in the



WESTMINSTER ABBEY CHORISTERS AT PLAY.

United States, and expects to return to America for further evangelistic work in 1908. We shall be giving a

new portrait of Gipsy Smith to illustrate the article. I have also to announce that an article from the pen of Mr. Charles M. Alexander may be expected shortly, and I am fortunate in having secured a contribution from Mr. Charles H. Gabriel, the composer of "The Glory Song," which has attained a world-wide fame. Sir Alexander Simpson will give his views on "The Influence of

Christian Missions on China."

I am certain that every one of my readers will follow month by month with increasing interest the fine serial story, "Miss Fallowfield's Fortune," by Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler, which begins in this issue. As always, I shall give each month several complete stories by well-known writers, including C. E. C. Weigall, Theo Douglas, Lillias Campbell Davidson, Scott Graham, and Agnes Giberne.



How You May He'p.

I WONDER whether it has occurred to some of my readers, who, perhaps, live retired lives, that

they can do a large amount of good by getting new readers for "The Quiver"? In these days when there is so little appropriate Sunday reading I think we may fairly claim that "The Quiver" is all the more deserving of being recommended. Why should not you send half a dozen copies of "The Quiver" to friends who do not already subscribe to the magazine, and write to them urging them to sub-

scribe? In this way you may direct the thoughts of your friends Sunday by Sunday to higher things.



(Photo: Russell.)

"THEO DOUGLAS."



MRS. C. E. C. WEIGALL.

COUNTRY LIFE SIXTY YEARS AGO.

By the Rev. Canon Augustus Jessopp, D.D.



REARER sixty than fifty years ago since I began my professional life as a curate in the much-favoured country village of Parpour—a parish on the old Roman Roadyclept the Ermine Street, which runs almost in a straight line from London to Lincoln, and a great deal further northward, even beyond the great wall of Antonine.

I have called Parpour a much-favoured parish, and so it was. In extent it covered little more than 1,500 acres; its population was barely 200. Every acre belonged to my dear friend, who was a man very much before his time—a man of earnest piety—a philanthropist of wide views—a gentleman of some wealth and large heart. He had succeeded his father in the ownership of the estate about 1850, and succeeded his brother as Rector of the parish a year or two before that date. Inasmuch as there was not enough to occupy my time in so small a sphere of clerical work, it was stipulated that I should act also as curate of the adjoining parish of Yoxham, and undertake the oversight of the four or five hundred inhabitants in the way of house to house visiting. I was very young; I married absurdly early; I was quite poor. A little house was built for me at Parpour, and I was to do my best, and that I tried to do, making many a silly mistake, as young men are sure to do who are in earnest and yet lack experience.

Our saintly St. Ambrose, among the first things that he did on succeeding to the estate, determined to build a school for the labourers and others who might choose to avail themselves of it. I think it was capable of holding fifty children. No inspector nowadays would certify that it was capable of accommodating thirty scholars. The school was built, furnished, provided with all books and materials, and the mistress paid and a house found rent free for her, at the sole expense of the Rector.

I believe that I am right in saying that this school was the first school founded in East Anglia in a parish of less than 200 inhabitants. It must have been opened about 1845, for it was a going concern in

1850, and under the management—if I may venture to use such a term—of a silly old fellow who wore a voluminous dirty white neckcloth round his neck, with an old second-hand clerical coat upon his shoulders and corduroy breeches with grey stockings. He certainly "dressed at the Rector," but he was very far indeed from looking the character.

The initial difficulties that stared us in the face in starting Parpour School were formidable, and not easy to deal with. In those days the women and children in a county parish were as necessary to the tillage of the land as were the strong and able-bodied men. There were few "gentlemen farmers" in those days. A farmer took part in all the work of his farm, and expected his family to do the same; so also the labourers, men, women, and children. Boys and girls of five or six were almost invariably employed in the fields. Sometimes they were scaring off the birds. Sometimes they went with their mothers picking stones off the land; sometimes "dropping" when the seed corn was "dibbled" in the furrows, sometimes one way, sometimes another. But the children were not only useful, they were actually necessary.

It is difficult—almost impossible—for men and women of thirty and forty to realise what the tillage of the land meant fifty or sixty years ago. In thousands of country parishes during the first half of the nineteenth century the corn was sown broadcast. In those days the drilling of the seed by the use of a simple machine was only just beginning. In the smaller fields the sowing was carried on by the sower walking along a straight line with a dibbling iron in each hand. The dibbling iron was a tool with a handle, like a spade's shaft, about two feet long, terminating in a heavy iron point about as big as a goose's egg. The dibbler walked backwards, and as he walked he made two holes in the ground with his dibble, giving the tool a quick turn of the wrist and then taking a short step backwards.

As fast as the holes were made the seed was dropped into them, and somehow or other the earth covered them. The dropping of the seed into the holes was sometimes done by a woman, who moved forwards

as the dibbler moved backwards: or, as often as not, it was managed by two children of five or six years old, to whom it was really hard work, and who got many a hard word for their pains.

Of course, when the women and children were wage-earners, the parents were not likely to be very eager for education, even where any schooling could be got. And the farmers were, as a class, very strongly opposed to giving them "larning," for indirectly the master and the men had to pay for it.

In hay-time and harvest the fields were full of women and children. The corn was even reaped by women in many cases, the sheaves being tied up by the children. Harvest work was—as it still is—very hard work indeed. The farmer had to keep a sharp lookout on the shirks. The continuous stooping over the standing corn was awfully trying for the first week of reaping, and the temptation was to leave the "haulm" or standing straw as long as they could. I remember hearing a gang of reapers laughing boisterously on one occasion when a farmer had got drunk early in the day, and left the men to do as they pleased.

"Farmer Google he went asleep, and there was a lot on 'em as repp the twelve acres at Dumptelow in a surprising time! Why, the haulm after they'd done it stood more nor two foot high, and the sheaves they looked like a parcel of toddling babies!"

A great deal of the farming work was done by contract. Three or four strong fellows would go on the tramp and take a job of mowing, or reaping, or draining, at so much the piece. It was wonderful to observe how exactly they could estimate the size of a field and the weight of the crop that stood upon it. Once engaged on a job, they did not spare themselves. Three men would agree to mow a meadow for so much; they would begin at three o'clock in the morning and labour continuously till nine o'clock at night, talking very little and swinging the scythe all the time, only stopping for food and drink. Everyone brewed his own beer in those days, and the labourers in harvest got as much small beer as they liked—the farmers did not stint them. Curious stories of the exhaustion of the men in harvest used to be repeated.

"My first husband," said one old woman, "was the biggest man in the parish, and he were a fleshy man too. I've known him all puffy wi' flesh in haysell, and when he'd done his harvest he were all that back like,

and he'd no more flesh on him than an atomy! [skeleton]."

But wherever there was hard work to do—in harvest, haysell, dibbling, or draining—there were always women and children helping and getting some small wages. That is to say, the children were a source of income to their parents, however small, and I believe the men liked it, and did not like their being "stocked away to school." Still less did the farmers like it; they "went agin that there book larning." It took some pressure on the part of St. Ambrose to get the children to school, and the first master was not an attractive personage. The people did not regard him as trustworthy. In fact, the man did not last long.

The children used to be sent to school dirty, ragged, and absolutely without any notion of discipline. It was impossible to insist on their washing their hands. I do not believe there was a labourer's house with a bar of soap in it.

"Soap!" said one old woman to me a few years ago. "None on 'em made no account o' soap in them times, 'cept it was a quarter of a pound of *squash* soap when they did what little washing they did du—and that was as it happened."

The result was that the personal dirt of the poor children was dreadful. In the spring we were always on the look-out for cutaneous diseases, and the vermin was disgusting. Nevertheless that school was not long before it began to be attractive, and after a year or so it was pathetic to have to turn away children from other parishes four or five miles off when we had no room for them. The little mites soon learned to sing children's songs, and the parents delighted in that, and the children were proud of getting on till they could actually "read a verse" and write their names.

After the school had been going on for a year or two, and improvement began to be evident, we determined to try a night school for the big boys. I think there were a dozen or fourteen of them. It was the hardest work I ever did in my life. I had a theory that the lads must be bawled at, and those two hours three or four times a week in the winter time took so much out of me that it very nearly came to an utter breakdown. The point, however, is that fifty or sixty years ago there was such a thing as a school in a tiny little country parish in East Anglia, and that we worked that little school before his Majesty's

inspector had been dreamed of by the powers that were.

But our loving St. Ambrose was not the man to pause in his activity as a social reformer. I think it was at the same time that he built and furnished his village school for the little ones and gave them their education free of all payment, that he began

would certainly not pay small cultivators. But if a rood of land would not support its man an acre would, and accordingly he marked out one of the best fields on the estate, and he marked it out in one-acre allotments, and offered these parcels to the labourers. That could never answer. There was necessarily a great disturbance in the labour market of that parish.

In some few years, I think, there was hardly a man who held or who cared to hold more than a quarter of an acre, and it was a question with them whether it actually paid to do that. How they got their allotments ploughed I know not. I suppose the dear rector did that for them. He held a farm of about 300 acres in his own hands, and I think he did all the ploughing for the first year without charge.

But the world was a different world then, my masters! They wore different clothes, they consumed other food, they warmed themselves with different fuel. And as to their dwellings in the remote villages, they were on a par with the worse sort of North American wigwams. But I verily believe they were happier, more joy-



A RECENT PORTRAIT OF CANON JESSOPP.

his experiment of providing allotments for the labourers. Then the neighbours shook their heads at him. He was a "visionary" and a "theorist," and an unpractical man. Of course he was! Unhappily, he started with a theory that it was as true as Gospel that every rood of ground should support its man; but he was face to face with the fact that our parish of Parpour was on a deep bed of clay, and that sort of land

ous, had more laughter in them than their grandchildren and great-grandchildren of to-day.

It would take a volume to set it all out as it might be set out if one only had the memory to recall it and the heart to write it. But then it was only a few months ago that I had to confess to an inquirer that I was going on for eighty-three.

THE CLOSING OF SANTA CLAUS' DOOR.

A Complete Story for Children by Anne Warner.

THE door was positively partly open! Brian stood petrified at the sight. That door had been closed for three days. Mysterious noises had resounded from behind it. A

curious, half-suggestive delightful kind of odour lingered in the hall near it. Papa, Mamma, and Aunt Bertha slipped in and out of it in a suspicious—not to say guilty—manner. The whole business was strange—very strange. The door was *always* closed. And now it was absolutely open—that is to say partly open. About four inches open.

And to make things worse, right in the opening lay a little sprig of Christmas greens. Very curious. Of course, Brian knew about Christmas, because he had seen one and remembered its joys with great distinction. And he knew that another Christmas was approaching now because Nurse had him mark the days off on the calendar that hung over his bed. It was coming in three days. Santa Claus was going to bring it. Santa Claus brought everything.

A curious little thrill ran all through Brian, from his curly mop of hair down to his sandalled feet.

"Santa Claus is bringing Christmas now," he thought, "and he is putting it in that room and the door is open, and I can look."

And yet something held him back. He could not understand why or what; but something kept him from looking. It was very curious, because there seemed to be no reason for his *not* looking. There he was right by the door, and the door was partly open, and it was most interesting on the further side, and yet he hesitated to look.

It was cold in the hall, and fast growing dark. Papa and Mamma had gone away with the jingle-bells and big white Bob. Nurse was rocking Phyllis to sleep in the nursery above. Brian had been sent down to stay in the sitting-room, and now here was the open door blocking his path.

It was a curious place and hour for a little soul—so very new to life—to have its first great problem thrust upon it. And it was curious how Brian stood there in the twilight and battled fiercely without even knowing that he was being tempted. It seemed to him quite right and proper that he should look through that generous crack and satisfy himself as to the mystery within—only something prevented.

The something not only prevented his taking one step further down the hall, but it also made his heart beat very fast and his little face burn hotly. What could it be? He clasped his small hands tightly together and tried to think it out.

"It isn't wrong to look," he said to himself, "because Santa Claus left it open, and, of course, if he left it open he knew that anyone could look."

But even this reasoning did not advance his feet one step. Only his heart beat faster and faster, and his forehead grew hotter and wetter beneath the thick, soft curls.

Just then an odd thing happened. In the fast fading light a little mouse scampered down the hall, past Brian and past the door. Brian was not at all afraid of mice, Nurse having taught him (with a view to bravery rather than to zoology) that mice were baby rats and always running to do their parents' bidding; but he was surprised at not having heard it before he saw it. And the next thing he thought was how the little mouse had not stopped one second by the open door.

"He just ran by," thought the boy, "and I will just run by too."

And he covered his eyes with his hands and rushed forthwith past the yawning gates of Paradise, landing two seconds later in the cheerful sitting-room where Aunt Bertha was placidly knitting.

"Why, Brian," said his Auntie, "what *is* the matter?"

She looked so startled and surprised that he felt quite confused.

"Nothing is the matter, Auntie," he tried to say, and then, to his own great astonishment, his chin quivered and he burst into tears. Aunt Bertha threw down the knitting and gathered him close in her arms at once.

"Tell me all about it, darling," she said; but Brian would not say a word until his sobs were quieted and his equilibrium completely



restored. And then he did not tell her very much. He only asked :

"Auntie, when you want to do something and something stops you—something that isn't anything—what is it that stops you?"

Aunt Bertha looked into his big, sweet eyes, and her own eyes grew deeper.

"It is your conscience that stops you, Brian," she said, laying her hand on his.

"It was my conscience," he whispered to himself in an odd, awe-stricken tone. He knew what his conscience was, but he had never come face to face with it before, so to speak. And so that was what had held him back.

It was quite dark in the hall now, and the only light that there was shone through the crack of the opened door. Step by step he



"It's rather a fine thing to be an English gentleman."

"And must you mind it?"

"Always."

"The same as Nurse?"

"Yes."

He was silent for a minute or two, and then he slipped from her knee and went and stood by the window and thought.

And then he left the room and went out into the dark hall again.

approached it, until finally his little hand rested on its panels. His heart was beating fast again, his little face blazed hotly, but there was no puzzle in his brain.

Slowly, very slowly, the little hand pressed and pressed, and after a few seconds the door yielded and closed softly.

Then Brian turned and retraced his steps to the sitting room.

Aunt Bertha was gone for a minute, and when she came back she found him sitting close before the fire, his chin in his hands and his elbows on his knees. He looked up at her and smiled, and was surprised to see that her eyes were wet.

"Brian," she said, kneeling down beside him on the hearth rug, "it's rather a fine thing to be an English gentleman—isn't it?"

He did not quite understand.

"But you're not one," he said.

"No, but you are."

"Am I, Auntie?"

She nodded.

Outside the jingle-bells were sounding, and Papa and Mamma were returning from their drive. The next minute they both came into the room, and who should they have with them but Grandmamma—Grandmamma in her yellow fur collar that always made her look wintry and sunshiny.

"Merry Christmas, Brian," said Grandmamma, as he ran to hug her.

"But it isn't Christmas yet," said Brian; "I know, because I'm marking my calendar."

"I think that you must have forgotten to mark it some days then," said Grandmamma, "because this is Christmas Eve."

He was quite dumbfounded. That meant that directly after his tea the mysteries beyond the door would all be thrown open to him. You can imagine how much appetite he felt for his food in the circumstances.

And now comes the really wonderful part of my story.

I could not possibly do justice to what was in that room when everyone entered it after tea that night. It was so full and so beautiful that it was quite astonishing to think that Santa Claus could have managed so much all by himself. There was a Christmas tree, also holly wreaths, also greens looped in every direction, also toys, also books, also pretty nearly everything. But in front of all was a splendid horse with a spring so fastened under that there was no comparison whatever between his motion and the old-fashioned rocking-horse that looks so foolish. And tied to the horse's

neck was a letter with a big red seal, and Papa took it and opened it, and read it aloud. And it said:

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"In my hurry this afternoon I rushed off leaving the door open. When I returned to light the candles on the Christmas tree I found the door shut. The fairies tell me that whoever shut the door shut it to help keep my Christmas secrets inside, and I am very much obliged to him or her for so doing. I desire to present this horse to whoever shut the door. Please inquire for the name.

"Yours most truly,

"SANTA CLAUS."

"This is very remarkable," said Papa. "Who can have shut the door? Did you shut it?" he asked Aunt Bertha.

"No," said Aunt Bertha, "I was in the sitting-room."

So Papa asked everyone in the room, one after another.

Brian was standing by his mother, holding her hand, and his face was all one crimson glow. He was the youngest person present, so he was the last asked. He was so excited that he could hardly speak.

"Brian, did you shut the door?" his father said.

"Yes, Papa."

There was a minute's hush, and then of a sudden the church bells rang out across the snow in celebration of the coming of the Christmastide.

Brian had his arms around the horse's neck, and the happy tears stood on his long eyelashes. He looked at them all in a sort of speechless rapture, and then all looked at him.

And then at last he spoke:

"I will run just like the mouse always," he said earnestly, "and I will go in the dark and shut *all* the doors."

Behind that speech lay the resolution that bases a future on the Rock of Right.

"God bless him!" said Grandmamma.





For more than forty years Sir John Kirk has worked laboriously for the Ragged School Union, spending time and money in feeding the bodies and brightening the souls of the helpless little ones of London. During this time thousands of children have passed through his hands, to become better citizens than if they had never felt the touch of his magic personality. It was a surprise to Sir John when he was invited to visit the King at Buckingham Palace, and received the honour of knighthood from His Majesty. In the following stories, which we have persuaded Sir John to write for us, the veil is lifted from the terrible underworld in which he has worked so long.

Stories of our Ragged School Work.

By Sir John Kirk.

I.—"TOODLEOO'S" TEA.

IT was at one of our Christmas parties that we specially noticed Toodleoo. His "Chrissun" name he hardly knows himself, but, whatever that may be, he is "Toodleoo" for short. He sat at the loaded tea-table, among the other children, a sad little six-year-old, with a white, pinched face. Unlike his companions, he made no attempt to "fall to" at the word of command after grace was sung. He sat perfectly still,

looking at the food on his plate until we felt sure something was wrong.

"What's the matter, Toodleoo? Don't you like that nice sandwich?"

"Can't eat it, teacher."

"Aren't you hungry?"

"Yes, teacher," in a whisper.

"Tell me what you had for dinner, dear."

"Didn't 'ave no dinner—'cos I was comin' 'ere. See?"

"Breakfast, then?"

"
"ea
you
"
sob
noth
W
to t
one
"
Too
and
the
a go
"
ing
thin
fect
wou
an
min
but
"
My
didn
Re
sat c
littl
over
thor
enter
made
dire
thro
littl

Th
Hom
It w
was
a fe
list
repe
wom
thre
cold
Unb
what
crou
mast
room
fello
coffe
some
warm
mast

"I 'ad some bread."

"Then, Toodleoo, drink your tea, and eat some nice bread-and-butter; it'll do you good."

"I can't, teacher." And then with a sob the child broke out: "They ain't got nothin' at 'ome!"

We looked at each other. It was easy to understand. Then a bright idea struck one of the questioners.

"Would you like to run home first, Toodleoo, and take a nice bag of sandwiches and bread-and-butter to your mother and the other children, so that they shall have a good tea?"

"Rather!" And the little fellow's drooping figure stiffened up at the thought. The thing was done, and as fast as his slip-shod feet, encased in his mother's old boots, would carry him, Toodleoo was off with an armful of provisions. In less than ten minutes he was back again, carrying a large but cracked and handle-less toilet jug.

"Can I take some tea 'ome, teacher? My mother *would* like a cup of tea, but I didn't tell 'er as I should arsk yer."

Returning from his second journey, he sat down comfortably and "tucked in," his little smiling face plainly showing that, his overburdened heart relieved, he could now thoroughly enjoy his own treat and the entertainment which followed. Inquiry was made later, and the family found to be in dire straits, but the crisis was tided over through the attention drawn to the case by little Toodleoo himself.

II.—A MIDNIGHT CALL.

The master and matron of our Holiday Home at Windsor had retired for the night. It was after half-past ten, and every light was out, when they were startled by hearing a feeble knock at the front door. They listened in some surprise, and it was repeated. Mrs. S., that devoted, motherly woman whom all the boys love, hastily threw on some clothing (it was a bitterly cold night in winter), and went downstairs. Unbolting the door and opening it wide, what should she see but two little forms crouching on the step! Down came the master with a light, and lifted them into a room, where it was found that the little fellows were in a state of collapse. Hot coffee and food were brought, and these somewhat restored them. While a good warm bath was being prepared by the master—for the children were bespattered

with mud from head to foot—the matron gleaned the why and the wherefore of such an untimely visit.

"We're come because we wanted to see you, matron."

"But how did you get here?"

"We walked."

"Walked! All the way?"

"Yes, matron."

"And *where* do you live?"

"Hoxton. We didn't know it was so far, matron."

"And what did you have to eat, my poor boys?"

"We had some bread for our breakfast, and we saved some of it. We started at eight o'clock this morning."

"Whatever made you think of such a thing?"

"It was such a long time since we was here, and we did want to see you so, matron, so we thought we'd try and come."

Who could help being touched? The two little chaps felt well rewarded, when tucked into the clean beds, with matron's kiss, even although they were sent back by train next day, with a special injunction not to tell their playmates!

III.—A LADY OF THE SLUMS.

Attending one of our Ragged Schools is a little black-eyed girl, with tangled locks and ragged, dirty frock. Through her child's connection with the school, the mother began to creep in occasionally to the services and to attend the mothers' meeting. She was no better dressed than her neighbours, and, alas! no cleaner. She was said by them to keep herself to herself, and yet at times she would give them the rough side of her Irish tongue, with a choice of expletives which gained her some notoriety and distinction. And yet withal it was felt that there was a certain something about her which kept everyone more or less at a distance—a trace of refinement, a touch of innate delicacy, which they were unable to understand or appreciate. A few words with the Biblewoman, a conversation or two with the superintendent, and both were convinced that, whatever she had become, Mrs. M. belonged to a good family. They tried their best to win her. Sometimes she seemed soft and yielding, but would suddenly flare out in one of the terrible tempests of passion which went far to undermine her health. The superintendent would sigh and wait and pray; he knew, and God knew,

that the cause was not so much wickedness as sheer misery.

One Sunday evening she suddenly rose in the middle of an earnest address, and rushed from the place, clasping her thin, tattered shawl about her with grim determination. She was immediately followed by one of our workers, who, seeing the look of stony despair in the poor white face, had an inkling of what was in her mind.

"Where are you going?" he asked her cheerfully.

"To the river—to the river! Let me go!"

"To the river? Then I'll come with you, and we'll have a little talk on the way. Don't go so fast!"

She did not reply, so he took her arm and walked in the direction she had indicated. What passed on the way is almost too sacred to write of. The story of the Cross had so touched her, so convicted her, that she was in torment and mad with the desire to end her life and "be done with it."

"But *would* you be done with it? You know better," her companion went on. And then the poor woman was gently led to tell her sad story, and to ask for help in her burden of sin, and for light to guide

her to the Saviour Who had died for even such as she.

She was the daughter of a clergyman, and connected with some of the best families in Ireland. Her education was completed at a good boarding-school, and her youth had been all that was bright and happy. But her downfall came through a friend of the family, and in her fierce pride and shame she fled from home. Lower and lower she sank as years passed on, no hand stretched out to save (she was too proud to seek one), until at last in her wretchedness she married a labouring man, and came to live in a slum home in one of the worst districts of London.

When, shortly after the episode which led to her confidence in the superintendent, she lay dying, her relatives were communicated with, and her last hours were cheered by the kindness of long-forsaken friends. Although her passionate heart had fought for years against yielding to the Spirit's influence, we at last had the joy of knowing that this poor, sorely-tried soul, whose life had been one long "Inferno," as she herself called it, had found its haven and was at peace.

GRANDMOTHER'S PATCHWORK.

YES, dear, the story of my life is in this quilt,

And all its memories, and all its ups and downs.

A tiny child of three, I toddled in this print;

And my grandmother wore these darker greys and browns.

When I first went to school I went in this pure white,

And well do I remember everything that day:

The lessons and the teachers, and the boys and girls,

The singing and the marching, and the hours of play.

The day I met your grandfather I wore this blue;

It was a pretty colour, and it matched my eyes.

But that is fifty years ago and more, and yet

It seems but only yesterday—how the time flies!

When we began to walk together these I wore.

These pretty spots and stripes in shades of pink and blue.

And after we were wed I always had these leaves,

And little buds and blossoms of a lilac hue.

And here, a treasured place, my mother's gowns are kept—

Poor mother! in her grave this many a long year.

A bonny woman she! and good the stuff she wore!

At sight of it I almost see her standing near.

And these belong the bairns—your mother and your aunts—

A group of pretty lasses as was ever seen.

One wore these roses red, and one this cornflower blue,

And one this spotted pink with tiny sprigs of green.

And here's a sacred patch, for it belongs the boys—

The little one that died, and James who went to sea

And ne'er came home again. Come, roll the quilt up, child;

'Tis my most precious book, and yet it saddens me.

ELIZABETH B. PIERCY.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGES.

Conducted by "Mr. Anon."

I WANT you to send me Christmas gifts for our Fund which is to provide Radiography Apparatus for the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children. We have got a nice sum already, but we need £150 altogether. So please send me at once your gifts, addressed to "The Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C."

Then, will you join our new League of Loving Hearts? It only means your sending one shilling, as you will see on page 160, which tells you all about the League. Many of you will be glad, I feel sure, to help the Ten Societies by becoming members of the League. I will send you nice certificates as soon as you join.

A very happy Christmas to you all!

Mr. Anon

THE LITTLE MERIVALES' HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

A COMPLETE STORY BY FREDERICA J. TURLE.

BUT I don't call it a good idea at all," said the boy.

"Well, dear, you need not agree. I only thought of it this morning, and I would not dream of doing it without everyone's approval."

Sydney kicked a footstool impatiently.

"I never heard of such a thing!" he said. "Christmas without any presents! Why, it wouldn't be Christmas Day at all."

"Very well dear, then, we will not do it," said his mother, as she rolled up the pair of stockings she had been darning, and stuffed all the other little well-worn socks and stockings back into the mending-bag. "Post the letters which are on the hall table if you are going out, Sydney," she added, as he left the room.

Sydney walked slowly downstairs, popped the letters into his pocket, and then hurried round to the coach-house for his bicycle. The tyres were quite flat, and the handle-bars looked rather dingy after the three months' rest of term time; but after a vigorous rubbing the plated parts shone once more, and contenting himself with a casual "wipe-over" of the rest of the machine, Sydney pumped up the tyres and started for his ride.

He posted the letters in the pillar-box at the end of the road, and then paused for a moment, wondering which way to go.

"I'll go and see Aunt Prissie," he thought, as he mounted his bicycle once more, and in less than half-an-hour he was standing on the door-step of a neat little villa on the outskirts of the town.

Aunt Priscilla was in the hall interviewing a poor woman.

"I'll be with you in a minute, Sydney," she said. "You can stay to lunch, of course?"

"Yes, thank you, Aunt Prissie," said the boy, as he hung his cap on a peg in the hall and walked into the morning room, where the various things spread about all over the table and chairs showed that Aunt Priscilla had been having a busy time.

"I have been turning out my charity cupboard," she said when she came in. "And I find I shall have to work very hard before Christmas if I mean to give away as many bundles this year as I did last. I have dipped into it rather this autumn, I am afraid. There were those poor children whose father died suddenly—your mother gave me some of your children's old baby-clothes for the little twins; and then the Simpsons, who emigrated to Canada—I had to help them with their outfit; and yet I don't think I can disappoint any of the families I gave Christmas bundles to last year."

The little old lady was folding up the different articles of clothing as she talked, and

presently she turned to her nephew with a smile.

"That's finished!—just for the time," she said. "Now we can have a cosy chat until luncheon, Sydney," and drawing up a chair to the fire she set to work on one of her usual pieces of crochet.

"This is a shawl for old Mrs. Kent," said she. "How did you come to-day? Walking or bicycling?"

"Bicycle," said Sydney.

"That was your last year's Christmas present, wasn't it, from your father?"

"Yes," said the boy, gloomily. He watched his aunt's busy fingers for some moments, and then came out with the whole story: How mother wanted them to give up all their Christmas presents this year so that they might pay the rent for a poor woman whose husband had met with an accident, and provide the family with food and firing.

"Of course, it wouldn't have mattered any other year," said the boy; "we could have done that and had presents as well, just little presents, I mean; but this year, after father's illness, and having the doctor for all those weeks and everything, mother says that if we do this, then she and father couldn't afford to give us *anything*; and just think of no stockings or presents or anything for the little ones."

"Yes, it is hard on the little ones," agreed Aunt Priscilla. "Of course, you and Molly are old enough to appreciate the real delight of being able to share with others a little of the joy out of your own lives."

Sydney wriggled uncomfortably. Somehow Aunt Priscilla had the knack of seeing so much good in the people with whom she came in contact that it made them want to raise themselves to the standard of her opinion.

"I don't think I should mind so much if it wasn't for the little ones," assented Sydney, after staring at the fire for some minutes and thinking out the problem in his head. "But just think of Christmas morning, when they stretch out their hands for the stockings and find them empty!"

Aunt Priscilla quite appreciated the tragedy of such a doleful picture, and she plied her crochet-hook in silence for some time while she tried to think what had better be done.

"What does Molly think of the plan?" she asked presently.

"Oh, Molly likes it," said Sydney, rather shamefacedly; "she loves giving presents to poor people and all that sort of thing."

"Only I daresay Molly is sorry also that the little ones should have no presents," said his

aunt. "Well now, I believe I have thought of a plan. How would it be for you and Molly to make presents for the others?"

"Make them? Do you mean pin-cushions and things?" said the boy in a disappointed tone.

"No, not pin-cushions," said Aunt Priscilla, laughing as she remembered the numerous round cardboard pin-cushions and little needle-books of which she had been the grateful recipient for many Christmas Days; "but I know Dolly and Nora have longed for a dolls' house for months. Mother told me she had meant to give them one this Christmas. How would it be for you to make them one out of a packing-case? I believe I have just the thing out in my shed."

"That would be lovely!" cried Sydney delightedly. "And I know what to make for Gordon and Norris—a toboggan. They've always wanted one, and it tells you how to make one in last month's 'Chums'."

"A toboggan—the very thing!" said Aunt Priscilla. "Well then, if you like to bring your tools here you can make both the dolls' house and the toboggan in my shed, and I will teach Molly how to make dolls' furniture."

"What a good thing we began holidays a fortnight earlier than usual this term, because of the mumps at school," said Sydney.

"Yes; you and Molly can come here every afternoon for the next three weeks and make your presents," said his aunt, thinking that it would probably be a great relief to their mother to have the two elder children happily employed; and she was rewarded by the happy faces of her little nephew and niece as they came in to tea each afternoon after working away in the shed, for Sydney had said that if Molly would help him with the big things he would help her with the little tables and chairs; so every evening the hour after tea was given up to making the dolls' house furniture, while Aunt Priscilla worked at her charity garments and told tales of her childhood.

"We must make things for mother and father," said Sydney one day; and after grave consideration they decided on a bookshelf for father, and a work-box for mother's reels of cotton.

It was disappointing to be unable to afford anything better than pitch-pine wood, but clever Aunt Priscilla taught the children how to do poker-work, and both the bookshelf and the work-box were really pretty when they were finished, ornamented with quaint scrolls and flowers; while Molly put the finishing touch to the work-box by marking mother's initials in Roman letters in the centre of the lid.

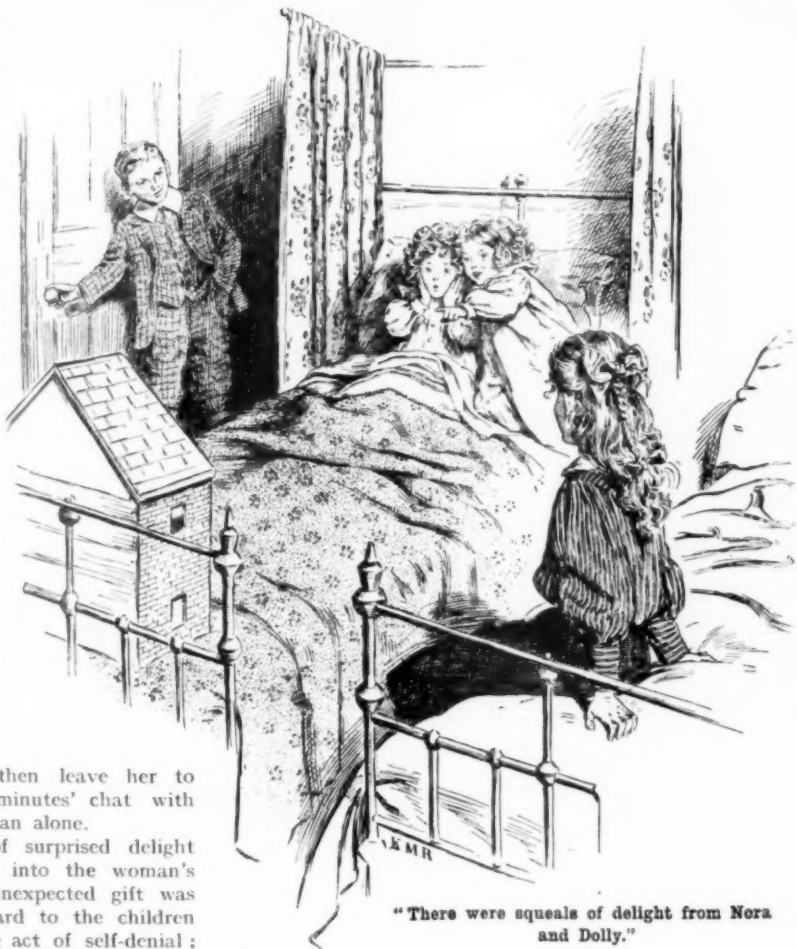
On the morning of Christmas Eve the six children went with mother to give their Christmas present to Mrs. Clarke. Mother had at first proposed that only Molly and Sydney, the two elder children, should accompany her; but Dolly and Nora and the two little boys had begged so hard to be allowed to go too, that mother had said they might all come just to see the money given to Mrs. Clarke, and then leave her to have a few minutes' chat with the poor woman alone.

The look of surprised delight which flashed into the woman's face at the unexpected gift was sufficient reward to the children for their little act of self-denial; and Sydney and Molly told Aunt Priscilla that afternoon all about their visit, and that Mrs. Clarke had told them she had stayed awake the night before wondering how she was to pay the rent and get food for the children, and had almost decided that they would have to go to the workhouse.

"And then her poor husband would have no home to go to when he left the hospital," said Aunt Priscilla. "Just imagine, children! You have prevented a home being broken up, and given a really happy Christmas to five people."

"Six, with the baby," said Molly.

"Is there a baby? I must see if I can find a few baby-clothes for Molly to take round in the morning. It is almost dark now, children, and you have no time to lose if you want to get all your presents carted home to-night."



"There were squeals of delight from Nora and Dolly."

So for the rest of the afternoon the two children wheeled their cumbersome presents in a wheelbarrow from Aunt Priscilla's house to their own, and there was much wonderment amongst the servants at the bulky packages which were carried through the back passage to the little room at the end of the hall.

At Molly's earnest request mother had given up the key of this room to the children, and that night, when all the little ones were in bed and asleep, Sydney placed the various presents at the end of each little bed so that they might see them as soon as they opened their eyes in the morning. The work-box and father's bookshelf he concealed under his own bed, and before daylight the next morning placed them outside his parents' room.

There were squeals of delight from Nora and

Dolly at the sight of the splendid dolls' house, painted red and white to imitate bricks, and furnished from kitchen to garret!

But a perfect roar came from the boys' room when they had undone the wrappings from the big parcel and discovered the toboggan.

Gordon and Norris had longed for a toboggan ever since last winter, when they had seen the little Somers tobogganing down the steep hill on the other side of the church; and when mother had asked if they would like to give up all their presents that year, so that they might give the money to Mrs. Clarke, it had required a good deal of self-control to keep the word "toboggan" out of their mouths; they had so hoped that mother and father would have given them one for Christmas; but neither of them had mentioned it, except to each other at night, when they had decided to ask mother to lend them the biggest kitchen tray as soon as the snow came.

When Norris discovered the collecting-box for the birds' eggs the little boy's joy was complete; but mother and father were even more pleased, for they knew how hard Molly and Sydney must have worked to prepare these Christmas gifts, and as they knelt in church that Birthday Morning they thanked God that their children had learnt the happy Christmas lesson that it is more blessed to give than to receive.



SUNDAY TALKS.

BY THE REV. A. AVERELL RAMSEY.

Salt is Good.

AMONG the "good things" of this life, salt holds a place of honour. Jesus says, "Salt is good" (Mark ix. 50). When He tells us a thing is good we may be quite sure it is so.

As food and as medicine, salt is pleasant, wholesome, useful; one of the very best things we know of. What should we do without it? A Roman proverb couples "sunlight" and "salt" together, as the two things which keep the world alive and sweet.

Almost every living thing needs salt. Sheep and cattle are fond of it. Out on the rude prairie, a tempting handful of salt will often lure the wildest horse within reach of the bridle. In our homes, salt enters into most of the food we eat, keeping it pure, making it palatable and digestible. Old Job asked, "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?" We must have salt with our eggs, salt in our bread and butter, salt with our meat and vegetables. Some doctors say that, if you have had a tooth pulled out, salt and

water held in the mouth will stop the bleeding, and that it is one of the best remedies for a sore throat.

This good thing, so useful, so necessary, is found in nearly every land. Someone has calculated that if all the salt of the sea were collected together and spread over the surface of the globe it would form a layer more than ten yards deep.

In Spain there is a solid rock of salt, the journey around its base is quite three miles. In Poland there are the largest salt-mines in the world. For 750 years they have been worked, and are still yielding a supply. In Worcestershire, a town built over extensive salt beds is so tunneled that many of the houses are tottering. Since the days when the Romans ruled in Britain, Droitwich has been famous as one of England's salt-cellars.

Have you noticed how much the Bible has to say concerning salt?

In the Old Testament we read of "The Salt Sea"; of Lot's wife, who became "a pillar of salt"; and of the bitter waters of Jericho, which were healed when Elisha cast salt into the spring. In the law of Moses, one of God's commandments is, "With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt."

In the New Testament, salt is mentioned as an emblem of goodness and Divine grace. To His disciples Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." No one can mistake the meaning of His words. Good people have a wholesome, purifying influence wherever they live. They restrain wrong-doers, they arrest the spread of evil.

In the Old World, when "the earth was corrupt before God," Noah, "a just man," was like salt in the midst of the foul mass. Only he and his family—eight persons in all—were saved when the flood drowned the world of the ungodly. If there had been "ten righteous men" in Sodom, the Lord would have spared the city for the sake of the ten. "Righteous Lot" was the only grain of salt in the wicked place, and it was more than he could do to save it from ruin.

Good children are like "salt" in their homes, their schools, their playgrounds—everywhere. Not from their lips come the hasty, angry, naughty words one sometimes hears. Not in them are seen the passionate tempers, the sly, selfish little acts that so often make children unhappy. They are not envious, greedy, spiteful, untruthful, but amiable, generous, kind, trustworthy. Their presence is like sunshine in the garden, making all the flowers smile; like salt in the larder, keeping everything it touches from turning sour.

May I tell you of a bright young girl whose brief life was a beautiful ministry of pure blessing wherever she moved? On the day before her funeral, one of her teachers said to me, "I never knew anyone who had more influence in school and college than Bessie had, and the

influence was always good. If there was a girl poorly dressed, and perhaps on this account likely to be slighted, Bessie took special notice of her, spoke to her kindly, and would often walk home with her to make her feel that she had a friend. If a pupil's lessons were hard, and she was 'kept in' after school to learn them, Bessie would, perhaps, ask to stay with her for company and help with the task. In the playground it was her joy to champion the weaker side in the games. A poor tennis-player might always rely on Bessie to choose her for partner and encourage her to do her best."

These are among the "little things" that never die, of which we sometimes sing:

"Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden,
Like the heaven above."

Dear children, "Have salt in yourselves"—this salt of goodness. It is more than amiability of disposition. It is the spirit of Jesus in your heart. Having this, your temper, conversation, and conduct will make the lives of others better, purer, nobler.

When the baby of Roman Catholic parents is baptised, the priest puts a pinch of salt into the child's mouth, as a sign that it should speak with pure lips and a truthful tongue. St. Paul's maxim is, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." This is an excellent rule of life, and if we are to obey it we shall need much more than a pinch of salt once placed on our tongue. "He that is holy, He that is true," must fill us with His own mind and spirit and dwell in our hearts continually.

In Ireland, when a Romanist lay dead, a plate of salt was placed on the breast of the corpse, "to frighten away the devil," who was supposed to hate this symbol of incorruption and immortality. The peasantry use salt as a cure for serpent-bites; and we know that salt kills both weeds and worms.

Immeasurably better than salt in our coffin, the Spirit of truth and love in our heart will certainly cure the sting of "the old serpent, the devil," and destroy every root of bitterness and evil from our life.

"A covenant of salt" is mentioned in the book of Numbers (xviii. 19). It was an old usage in Eastern nations that when strangers met, if disposed to be peaceable, they ate salt together. It was a bond of friendship, a pledge of goodwill. Afterwards to cheat, or betray trust, was deemed doubly base—a breach of the sacred covenant of salt.

Among the Romans there was no more unlucky omen than the spilling of salt. In Da Vinci's great picture of the Lord's Supper, you can easily distinguish the traitor, Judas, for the salt-cellar is near him, and apparently he has knocked it over with his elbow—"spilling the salt."

Boys and girls, learn, above all things, to be true to Jesus Christ—His loving, loyal disciples. If the salt of His grace and truth be in your hearts, keep your covenant with Him. Keep it, and it will keep you.

THE NEW YEAR.

BY FRANK H. SWEET.

"**N**OW, what is that noise?" said the glad
New Year—
"Now, what is that singular sound I hear?
As if all the paper in all the world
Were rattled and shaken and twisted and
twirled?"

"Oh, that," said the jolly Old Earth, "is the
noise
Of all my children, both girls and boys,
A-turning over their leaves so new,
And all to do honour, New Year, to you."

THE FOOLISH ROSE.

WHILE I was walking in the garden one bright morning, a breeze came through and set all the flowers and leaves a-flutter. Now that is the way flowers talk, so I pricked up my ears and listened.

Presently an elder tree said: "Flowers, shake off your caterpillars."

"Why?" said a dozen all together, for they were like some children who always say "Why?" when they are told to do anything.

The elder said: "If you don't, they'll gobble you up."

So the flowers set themselves a-shaking till the caterpillars were shaken off.

In one of the middle beds there was a beautiful rose who shook off all but one, and she said to herself: "Oh, that's a beauty; I keep that one."

The elder overheard her and called: "One caterpillar is enough to spoil you."

"But," said the rose, "look at his brown and crimson fur, and his beautiful black eyes, and scores of little feet. I want to keep him. Surely one won't hurt me."

A few mornings afterwards I passed the rose again. There was not a whole leaf on her. Her beauty was gone; she was all but killed, and had only life enough to weep over her folly, while the tears stood like dewdrops on the tattered leaves.

"Alas! I didn't think one caterpillar would ruin me."

One sin indulged has ruined many a boy and girl. This is an old story, but a true lesson.

"Sweet is the Work."

Words by DR. WATTS.
Allegretto.

Music by E. BURRITT LANE, Mus.B., Dunelm, F.T.C.L.

1. *f* Sweet is the work, my God, my King, To praise Thy
2. *p* Sweet is the day of sa - cred rest, No mor - tal

name, give thanks and sing; To show Thy love by morn - ing
cares shall seize my breast; O may my heart in tune be

light, And talk of all Thy truth at night. A - men.
found, Like Da - vid's harp of sol - emn sound.

3.

f My heart shall triumph in my Lord,
And bless His works, and bless His word;
Thy works of grace, how bright they shine!
How deep Thy counsels! how divine!

4.

mf But I shall share a glorious part
When grace hath well refined my heart,
cr And fresh supplies of joy are shed,
Like holy oil to cheer my head.

5.

mp Sin, my worst enemy before,
Shall vex my eyes and ears no more;
My inward foes shall all be slain,
Nor Satan break my peace again.

6.

f Then shall I see and hear and know
All I desired or wished below;
And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy. Amen.

SEED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

O LITTLE town of Bethlehem !
 How still we see thee lie.
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
 The silent stars go by.
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth
 The everlasting light ;
 The hopes and fears of all the years
 Are met in thee to-night.

How silently, how silently,
 The wondrous gift is given !
 So God imparts to human hearts
 The blessings of His heaven.
 No ear may hear His coming,
 But in this world of sin,
 Where meek souls will receive Him still,
 The dear Christ enters in.

DR. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

* *

WHEN the Earl of Dundonald was sailing to take up the position of Commander-in-Chief in Canada, he said, "I am going to do my little bit for the Empire." If that spirit animated Christians—if they also desired to do their best in spreading the Kingdom of God—what a wave of righteousness would spread over the world !

* *

IN what spirit is your life being lived ? Are you seeking simply for personal happiness ? If so, these words apply to you : "The end and aim of our life is not happiness, but goodness. If goodness comes first, then happiness may come after. But if not, something better than happiness will come—blessedness."

* *

SOME of our readers have lost lately their mother. Here are some lines which may be welcome :

"Creeds pass, rites change, no altar standeth whole,
 Yet we her memory, as she prayed, will keep,
 Keep by this : Life in God and union there."

* *

YOU think sometimes that life was simpler when your mother lived, and that was the reason for her serene faith. But there were revolutions of thought and disturbances of ancient beliefs then as now. It was because her faith was based on a Rock—"and that Rock was Christ"—that she could wait peacefully for the solution of all mysteries. Your mother's God is ready to be your God. "Life in God" means "union there."

IF our actions are permitted by God to co-operate with His power and affect other people, surely it is just as reasonable to believe that our prayers can co-operate with God's power, and affect other people.

* *

IT is significant that Sir Leslie Stephen, writing on "Toleration" in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," commenting on the new conception of religion which comparative methods and newer sciences like anthropology have brought, says : "We cannot set down religious beliefs as simply the product of priestly impostors." He also adds : "Nor is it easy to admit the proposition that religious belief as a whole represents simply a stupendous misunderstanding generated by the blunders of primitive savages, a set of simply erroneous superstitions, which can be eliminated without difficulty from the general system of thought. Unless they had been more deeply rooted in human nature they would have died out before the newer lights of intellectual advance."

* *

IN Yucutan, where many explorers have tried to transcribe the Maya inscriptions, the vegetation grows so fast that in a few years the ruins which have been unearched are again hidden from view. So each age of criticism covers up the work of its predecessor.

* *

SOME people imagine that criticism is certain to be right just because it opposes current beliefs. In a New England church a lunatic once rose excitedly and said he would pull the place down. Women screamed, and men blanched with fright. A wise old man restored quiet and confidence by saying, "Let him try !" Then the alarmed congregation began to see the absurdity of one man pulling down a substantial stone building. In the realm of theology, one may say, "Let him try," when we hear one man after another threaten to destroy orthodox belief.

* *

THERE are lives like dry leaves driven before the wind, and tossed hither and thither by the gales, never to rest until they become a part of the soil from which they sprang. We may wonder and question why they have ever existed, but He who knows all hearts and all mysteries knows why these storm-tossed souls have been sent into the world. When we see as God sees we shall know why these helpless ones have been so steadily driven before the wind.

WHEN Sir William Crookes was asked whether Science will one day unlock the mystery, and show us wonders of the spiritual world, he refused to prophesy. "But," he said, "if you had come to me one hundred years ago, do you think I should have dreamed of foretelling the telephone? Why even now I cannot understand it! I use it every day; I transact half my correspondence by means of it; but I don't understand it. Think of that little stretched disc of iron at the end of a wire repeating in your ear not only sounds, but words—not only words, but all the most delicate and elusive inflexions and nuances of tone which separate one human voice from another! Is not that something of a miracle?"

* *

A FAMOUS man of science, Anastasius Kircher (1601—1680), inventor of the magic lantern, had a fine map of the heavens on his study wall. One morning an infidel came on a visit, and studied the map and pictures while Kircher went on writing. When Kircher rose the visitor asked: "Where did you get this lovely map? Who made it?" He replied: "Nobody made it; nobody hung it up; it came on the wall itself." "You jest," said the friend; "that is impossible." Kircher replied: "How is it impossible? You think it possible that the sun, moon, and stars themselves, which are only pictured here, are made by no one. Fools say in their heart, There is no God."

* *

SPIRITUAL progress is a discipline for the production of character; where worthiest character is produced there is the fullest revelation of God. Equally true and tender, an epitome of the spiritual history of mankind, is the personal witness of William Ellery Channing, who tells us how, when he had sought all the noble teachers—Lao Tszee, and Kung-Fu-Tszee, with Zoroaster and Buddha, Plato and Epictetus—"hand in hand they brought me up to the white marble steps, and the crystal baptismal font, and the bread-and-wine crowned communion-table—ay! to the cross in the chancel of the Christian temple—and as they laid their hands in benediction on my head, they whispered, Here is your real home."

* *

A GENTLEMAN, talking recently with a florist in Philadelphia, was surprised one evening by the sharp tinkling of a bell. "That is my frost bell," said the florist, and he hurried off to his greenhouses. "The fires had sunk," the florist explained on his return. "The watchman had fallen asleep. But for my frost bell I should have lost hundreds of dollars. That bell is a very valuable arrange-

ment to me," he continued. "An electrical contrivance is connected with a thermometer, and when the mercury falls to a certain point a bell rings a warning in my house or office. Many a crop of winter fruit and flowers has been saved in the last year or two by the clever little frost bell." That is because the owner heeds the warning and acts promptly to save his property. The bell itself could do nothing, any more than do the warnings uttered by ministers and Christian friends to the man who is in danger of losing his soul. If he was as alert and as prompt in his infinitely greater peril as the florist is in his smaller peril, his soul might be saved.

* *

AN old legend tells that Martin Luther, when he was torn by remorse and anguish over his past sins, had a strange dream. At that time he was very sick. While he lay in his bed, he saw the Evil One enter his room with a huge scroll upon his back. With a demoniac leer, he suddenly began to unroll it. The scroll seemed to grow larger and larger, as it unfolded before Luther's eyes. Then, as the fiend gradually unrolled it, Luther began to read. And as he read on, he found out that this long scroll was the record of his past evil life. "There are thy sins," the fiend chuckled. "Aha, see the record of them is all there." But as Martin Luther read on, suddenly a passage of scripture flashed into his mind. He raised himself upon his sick bed and said: "Oh, demon, you have forgotten to put something in that record. The record is all true, but you have forgotten the one promise which cancels all that ghastly list. Write it there. Write it there, now: 'The blood of Jesus Christ His son, cleanseth us from all sin.'" No sooner did Luther speak thus, the old legend says, "than the fiend gathered up his long, heavy scroll, and with a wild cry of defeat, fled into the darkness of the night."

* *

I MAY not find the good I seek
Here in this labyrinth of Time;
The eye may mark the mountain peak
Which human feet can never climb.
I may not do the good I planned
When in the early days I trod
The fragrant fields of fairy-land,
But I can leave my plans to God
He takes our gifts, however small,
So we but keep our purpose pure.
He does not ask great deeds of all;
Some must achieve and some endure.
The summit of my soul's ideal,
Too high for those who dwell in Time,
In that fair future shall be real,
And in that country I shall climb
GRACE PEARL BRONAUH.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PAGES.

POINTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

DECEMBER 1st. THE DEATH OF SAMSON.

Judges xvi. 21—31.

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) Samson as an example of wasted opportunities. (2) The short-lived triumph of Samson's enemies. (3) An ignoble end—"What might have been."

THE story of Samson's life is a sad one. He had the best opportunities, but he threw them away. That is typical of many young men to-day. "I was requested," writes a minister, "to visit the son of one of the members of my church. The young man had been convicted of a heinous crime, and was serving a sentence in prison. I put the question to him, 'What led you to commit the crime that brought you here?' From his reply I gathered that he was standing at a street corner with a companion, whom he told that he had promised to meet a friend at my church that evening. In reply he received an invitation to a meeting of a social club. For more than fifteen minutes he stood debating in mind which way to turn, when a second companion came up and the tide was turned in favour of the club. That night he was proposed for membership; at the next monthly meeting he became intoxicated and stabbed a fellow-member." This young man, like Samson, saw the right, but he chose to go the other way, and had to pay the penalty.

Longfellow's Example.

A better example of right living is given us by the poet Longfellow. When he was well advanced in years, his head as white as snow, but his cheeks still red as a rose, an admirer asked him one day how it was that he was able to keep so vigorous and write so beautifully. Pointing to a blossoming apple tree near by, the poet replied: "That apple tree is very old, but I never saw prettier blossoms upon it than those which it now bears. The tree grows a little new wood every year, and I suppose that it is out of that new wood that those blossoms come. Like the apple tree I try to grow a little new wood each year." What was possible to Longfellow is possible to all of us: we can keep "growing new wood," and in that way keep blossoming until the end.

DECEMBER 8th. RUTH'S WISE CHOICE.

Ruth i. 14—22.

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) Whole-hearted love. (2) Ruth's losses and gains in leaving Moab for Canaan. (3) How God orders even the smallest detail of life.

BECAUSE Ruth loved her mother-in-law she was willing to leave all and go with her. Love

never stops to count the cost; it is capable of any sacrifice. A remarkable operation took place in Philadelphia recently. A lady had become a sufferer from anæmia, and the doctors declared that only by the transfusion of blood could she be saved. Her husband was notified, and he promptly offered himself for the purpose. The artery in the husband's arm was severed, and at the same time the large vein in the wife's left arm was opened and the free end of her husband's artery inserted, and the juncture clinched with tiny needles. Every beat of the man's heart sent a stream of the red fluid into his wife's body. As each drop trickled in, the effect was noticeable, and as time passed it was apparent that life had returned to the woman's body. Love is ever willing to face danger and difficulty, and it shrinks from no suffering.

Back to the Fold.

Naomi left her own country when she would probably have fared better by staying in it. Many to-day turn their backs upon the faith of their fathers when they would be happier and better by following in the old and tried paths. Gipsy Smith tells a story regarding the late Dr. Charles A. Berry. Late one night Dr. Berry's door-bell rang. Everyone else in the house being in bed, he answered the call. At the door stood a typical Lancashire girl, with a shawl over her head. "Are you Dr. Berry?" she asked. "I want you to come and get my mother in." Thinking that her mother was in some drunken stupor, he directed the girl to the police. "No," she said, "she is dying, and I want you to get her into heaven." The doctor did not want to go, but he yielded under the importunity and earnestness of the girl. When they came to the house, Dr. Berry found that it was a house of shame. Drunken carousing was going on downstairs. Upstairs, in a small room, he found the woman dying. It was in the early days of his ministry, and his beliefs were carrying him towards Unitarianism. So he told the dying woman of the beautiful life, the loving ministries, and the noble example of Jesus. He urged her to follow Him, but she shook her head hopelessly, saying, "That's not for the like o' me: I'm a sinful woman, and I'm dying." "It flashed upon me," said Dr. Berry, "that I had no message of help and hope for that dying woman, and like lightning I leaped in mind and heart back to the Gospel my mother taught me. I told her of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, dying on the cross, that just such as she might be saved; of His blood poured out for the remission of sins, and all the blessed truths of the old, old story. And," he added, "I

got her in, and I got myself in, too." He had come back to his old faith, after trying something that seemed more attractive, but that did not satisfy or stand the test.

DECEMBER 15th. THE BOY SAMUEL.

1 *Samuel* iii. 1-21.

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) God's choice of Samuel. (2) Instant obedience. (3) The judgment on Eli's house.

THERE are some people who think it beneath their dignity to notice children. God had use for Samuel, and Samuel was but a child. When King Edward was in Paris not long ago, he descended from his motor-car one day and made his way to the edge of a lake where a crowd of prattling youngsters in charge of their nurses were engaged in feeding the water-fowl. His Majesty entered into the spirit of the thing, and, buying penny rolls at the kiosk near by, he gave them to the children. The ducks and swans had thus a good time, and the children, too, were delighted. "Say 'Thank you' to the kind gentleman," was the injunction of one of the nursemaids to her charge, and having been thanked by the polite little fellow, the King, whose identity was unsuspected, walked back to his car.

What a Boy can Do.

God proved that He could use a child for His own purposes. A fourteen-year-old boy from a missionary school went to his friends during a holiday. He was in the village temple one afternoon, when a feeble old man entered and passed from idol to idol, praying and offering incense sticks. The boy's heart was touched by the sight, but he thought it would be impertinent for a boy to teach an old man. Yet, as he watched him, the tears rolled down his cheeks, and he was finally forced to go to the old man. He said, "Would you mind a boy speaking to you? I am young; you are very old." The old man was not offended, and after some further conversation the lad told him the story of God's love. The man's heart was melted as he listened. "Boy," he said, "I am over sixty years of age, and I have never heard such words before." He took the lad home to dinner with him that his wife might hear the wonderful story, and the result was that these two people were led to the Saviour before they ever saw or heard of a missionary.

DECEMBER 22nd. CHRISTMAS LESSON.

Matthew ii. 1-12.

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The meaning of Christmas. (2) Its results.

A WRITER tells of standing before the window of an art shop, where a picture of the crucifixion of our Lord was on exhibition. "As I gazed," he says, "I was conscious of the approach of another, and, turning, beheld a little

lad gazing intently at the picture also. Noticing that this mite of humanity was a sort of street Arab, I thought I would speak to him; so I asked, pointing to the picture, 'Do you know Who it is?' 'Yes,' came the quick response; 'that's our Saviour,' with a look of pity and surprise that I should not know. With an evident desire to enlighten me further, he continued, after a pause, 'Them's the soldiers, the Roman soldiers,' and, with a long-drawn sigh, 'That woman crying there is His mother.' He waited, apparently for me to question him further, thrust his hands into his pockets, and with a reverent and subdued voice, added, 'They killed Him, mister. Yes, sir, they killed Him.' I looked at the little ragged fellow, and asked, 'Where did you learn this?' He replied, 'At the Mission Sunday School.' Full of thought regarding the benefits of Mission Sunday Schools, I turned away and resumed my walk, leaving the little lad looking at the picture. I had not walked far when I heard his childish treble calling, 'Mister! Say, mister!' I turned. He was running toward me, but paused; then up went his little hand, and with a triumphant note in his voice, he said, 'I wanted to tell you He rose again! Yes, mister, He rose again.'

The Influence of Christ.

Christ's influence upon the world is seen in every direction. When the Chinese Commissioners were in America, they were taken about by a delegation of citizens to see the sights of Chicago—the railway stations, the stockyards, the great factories, the great department stores, the sky-scrapers. Asked what interested him the most, one of the chiefs of the Commission replied, "The Hospital and the work of the Young Men's Christian Association."

DECEMBER 29th. REVIEW.

LANDSEER'S fondness for dogs was a proverb among his friends, but an even more remarkable thing was their invariable fondness for him. Even a strange dog would bound up to him with every demonstration of delight, as if greeting an old friend. A pretty incident is told of the painter's answer to a wondering question put by Queen Victoria, who asked him how he had gained his knowledge, so evident in all his pictures. "By peeping into their hearts," was the beautiful answer. By the same method will the teachers of the young gain the confidence and the trust of their scholars. Sympathy is the open sesame to all knowledge of those whom we would teach or help or benefit; and in proportion to the cultivation of this process will be the success of the teaching. There is a way to every heart, and if the teachers study to find it, they will find a willing reception for the ever captivating, ever melting, ever wonderful story of Jesus and His love.

LIFE'S CHEQUER BOARD.

A Complete Story by Helen Wallace, Author of "To Pleasure Madame," "The Coming of Isobel," Etc.

PART I. CHAPTER I.

"BUSINESS! That for your business!" snapping her withered fingers briskly. "I don't believe a word of it. You and Mr. Dalmahoy have been at it all day, Richard. No, no; you only want to get rid of Lesley and me, that you may have a better crack, and fancy yourselves Rick and Dick together again. I don't altogether hold with the way women are setting themselves forward nowadays——"

"That is because you have had your own way all your life, Aunt Mary," put in the tall girl through whose round, young arm old Lady Marchmont had slipped one heavily-ringed hand, though the erect little figure seemed no more in need of the support of her grand-niece than of the stout ebony cane on which she rested her other hand.

As they stood side by side, each was an admirable foil to the other, a study in black and white, in youth and age, though the two men were probably too familiar with the sight to note the piquant contrast. The old lady, with her high features and high-bred face, was worn indeed, but yet unconquered by the years which had passed in storm and sunshine over the white head, still bravely carried under the softening fall of lace which flowed down and mingled with her fluttering scarves and voluminous black draperies. The keen old eyes which had seen so many changes, youth and love and friends passing away, still looked out with zest upon life, well-nigh as ready to encounter and to relish fresh experiences as the girl beside her to whom all things were yet new.

The tall youthful figure at her side seemed to gain in height from the straight, simple folds of her white gown, sharply accented against Lady Marchmont's floating laces and gauzes, and still more from the fine poise and carriage of her head and shoulders, which with every firm and shapely line of form and limb spoke of an open-air life and abundant exercise. A

touch of colour was supplied by the ruddy gleam in the thick brown hair, which had its complement in the quick spark that roused anger or wakened humour could kindle in her eyes, while the white sheen of the single row of fine pearls, her only ornament, encircled a neck as white as they.

Best of all, none could be insensible to the frank sincerity of the brown eyes, or to the charm of her smile, when the young, red mouth relaxed into such bewitching curves. If anything were still lacking to give complete harmony to feature and expression, it might be that touch of softness which womanhood brings when fully awakened, though in her twenty-third year Lesley considered that she was a woman indeed, and that she had left the things of youth behind. Was she not her uncle's right hand within doors and without, while she extended a kindly protection towards her old grand-aunt which caused Lady Marchmont an occasional sly, secret smile.

She smiled that smile now, as she said:

"I get as much of my own way now as you care to allow me, my dear, but if once on a day I ever did get it, it was because I knew very well when and how to take it; but"—with a dry laugh—"I'll believe in the independence of women, and all the rest of it, when we can shut men's mouths with that one word 'business' as effectually as they do ours now. Eh, I know what you are thinking, Richard," with a twinkle in her keen, dark eyes, while her nephew, Mr. Richard Skene, advanced with old-fashioned courtesy to bow the two ladies out—"you're thinking that it hasn't shut one old woman's mouth over well. Maybe not—maybe not——" She paused.

The wide stream of light from the opened door poured into the dusk of the great hall without and fell upon a picture, barely seen by daylight in its obscure corner. It was a portrait of a young man, dark, gallant, winsome, a face which would easily awaken smiles, but which might leave tears behind when it was

turned away. The hard brightness of the old woman's eyes suddenly dimmed as they rested upon it.

"Then there's one bit of business I wish you would reconsider, Richard," she exclaimed impetuously. "It's he you can't forgive, rather than his son," with a slight gesture towards the portrait. Then her eyes sought her nephew's face. "How much longer will you visit the sins of the fathers upon the children? If it is Christian not to let the sun go down upon your wrath, is it wise to let another year and another come to an end—?"

"Pardon me, my dear lady, that bit of business is finally settled," broke in Mr. Skene in a tone from which there was no appeal. He seemed in no way ruffled by Lady Marchmont's sudden attack. "Lesley, you are allowing your aunt to stand in the draught," he added.

The heavy door closed behind the two women with a click, which, like Mr. Skene's frigid tones, seemed to convey a sense of finality. The portrait sank back into the shadow again. Lady Marchmont leaned a little more heavily upon Lesley's arm as they crossed the hall, which, beyond the radius of the fire-glow and the lamplight, lay in an umber dusk.

"Say it out, Lesley," she said bitterly. "Say that I gave you a fine example just now of how and when to get your own way. Truly there is no fool like an old fool, and I was a fool to speak to Richard as I did, but somehow the sudden sight of the dear lad's face made me speak."

"Fill your glass, Dalmahoy," said Mr. Skene, coming back to the table. He had closed the door, as his friend and lawyer's quick perceptions had noted, with more haste than usually characterised his somewhat precise ways and movements, as if to shut out definitely the thoughts which Lady Marchmont's sudden appeal might have awakened. But when he had followed his guest's example, he let his wine stand untasted and gazed absently before him.

The dining-room at Strode was one of the show places of the county. It was panelled not with oak, but with fine old mahogany, the costly whim of a former laird in the days when Scotland was striving to open a trade with the West Indies. By day most people pronounced it a gloomy room, in spite of its long range of windows opening on the south terrace. But by night it was transformed. The flames racing up the wide chimney were reflected from the glossy, satin-smooth surface of the panelling in ruby gleams, the hue of rare old wine, while the whole room was steeped in a warm, crimson haze, which threw into high relief the white damask, the flowers, and silver upon the table, and the faces of the two men seated at it in luxurious ease to all seeming.

But there was little content in the look of the owner of all this warmth and comfort. His face was a type of one cast of Scottish countenance to which the high forehead and the high cheek-bones give a look of unusual length, which is increased by a long upper lip and the firm set of the mouth. Just now Mr. Skene's lips were so tightly drawn that the

closed mouth might have seemed little more than the gash of an old wound. From the few excellent portraits which were allowed to break the dusky splendour of the walls, faces not unlike that of their descendant looked down, but they were full of shrewd, kindly humour, of high courage, and abundant capacity. On the face of their successor, in this moment of forgetfulness and unconscious self-revelation, there was stamped only the abiding bitterness of life-long disappointment.

On Richard Skene the fates had lavished every gift, save that crowning one of the power to enjoy them. So Dalmahoy was perhaps thinking, as the silence grew, and the sight of his friend's face took the flavour from the wine which he had been sipping with slow appreciation. The man was as white as parchment, the professional smile coming naturally to his mind, but it was not that which chiefly disturbed him. He set down his glass.

"Skene," he said, "I'm your lawyer, and in that capacity you can silence me when you like, but we were boys together, Rick and Dick to one another, as Lady Marchmont says, and I want you to let me speak to you as Dick, and not as the senior partner of Messrs. Sinclair, Dalmahoy, and Ferrier, W.S."

Mr. Skene started slightly, the thin, pallid lips parted in a sudden smile, which showed how happiness might have altered his face.

"I've stood a good deal from you," he said; "more than I would have taken from any other man. Say what you like, except upon one subject; but if you're going to be sentimental, like my old Aunt Mary, you may save your breath."

"I'm going to be sensible, I hope, but, as she says, there's a bit of business I wish you would reconsider. I wish you'd let me draw up a fresh will for you. I've been too long at the business," he went on, in spite of his host's slight movement of impatience, "not to know that the worst sort of harm a man can do is often after his death. There's no use trying to play Providence and keep a grip on other folk's lives after we are gone. There's been mischief enough done in that way already. If you had let Master Adrian alone I believe everything would have fallen out as you wished. Two young things in one house were bound to come together like two apples set a-rolling. And it might all come right yet. Give Adrian another chance. Let them meet as friends. If he saw Miss Lesley now, I'll be bound he'd change his tune. There'd be no more question of 'thrusting him on her,' which he quite rightly considered a far greater wrong to her than to himself, but don't perpetuate the condition. It's cruel to Miss Lesley—"

"If her feelings are wounded they will be well salved," said Mr. Skene dryly.

"Do you think she will thank you for that?" retorted Dalmahoy bluntly. "Not if I know anything of her. If she were your daughter instead of your niece it would be different, but after all Adrian is your natural heir, as he would have been your legal heir, had Strode been entailed. He is the last male of the line, the last of the old name—"

"Am I likely to forget that?" exclaimed



"How much longer will you visit the sins of the fathers upon the children?"

Mr. Skene bitterly, and his friend glanced away, wishing he could have used some other plea. "But is even that reason enough for me to hand over Strode to him, to turn it into a labour colony or an art school, or heaven knows what, according to the whim of the moment?"

"Pshaw! that was but the effervescence of youth, and as to all that, you could easily tie his hands, but Strode itself would be excellent ballast. How many a lad has planned a new heaven as well as a new earth—as easy to do the one as the other when you're at it—and then has docilely followed in his father's footsteps and made a good sober laird after all."

"Lesley's good commonsense would have been the best ballast. I can't trust Adrian"—a note of sharpness in the level tones—"he has too much of the French strain in him. Like father like son, and he and his father have inherited both name and nature from my uncle James's French wife. He grafted an alien strain on the old stock when he married Adrienne de Valcour," said Mr. Skene coldly.

"But if you think so ill of Adrian, why force him on the lassie? Is it fair to Miss Lesley? Is she any more likely to take a ready-made husband than the lad was to take a ready-made wife?" asked Dalmahoy shrewdly.

Mr. Skene fingered the stem of his glass for a moment in silence, and then he thrust it from him so suddenly that the glass upset and the wine spread in a widening pool over the table.

"Tut! tut!" ejaculated Mr. Dalmahoy, making a well-meant effort to divert a stream which was flowing in his direction.

His host turned upon him, a blaze of cold wrath upon the white face and in the pale, implacable eyes.

"Am I to go to my grave without having one desire, one hope in life fulfilled? Do you think it means nothing to me that since I have no son to come after me, I must sever Strode from the last of the Skenes? Is it so much to ask of Adrian that if he is to inherit Strode he should marry my only sister's only child, and so unite all that is left of the family and bind it to the land again? Do you think that if he had not been the last of our name I could have borne to have him under my roof, could have tutored myself to regard as my heir a lad whose every look and tone reminded me of the man who laid my life waste? You remember his father, Dalmahoy—my cousin Adrian. I was the heir—yes, but he was the favourite—you heard my old Aunt Mary just now—and did he ever lose a chance of throwing that in my teeth? As God's above, I believe he wooed Mary Erskine and wiled her away from me for no other reason than because he knew that my whole heart was set on her. He knew that she was everything to me, while to him she was a flower to be plucked and worn for an hour. I know what you would say—the man is dead. Thank God! I said, when I heard it, but he had time enough before he died to break his wife's heart—the woman on whom I would not have let a breath blow too harshly. And it is to this man's son you would ask me to hand over the inherit-

ance of my fathers, a lad who, for all these years, has countered me and thwarted me at every turn, and who, when I was fool enough to cherish one last wish at the end of my empty days, denied it to me, took my last hope from me, the last brightness from my barren age."

He checked himself abruptly, rose from the table, and, going to one of the windows, drew back the heavy curtain, and gazed out into the night.

Dalmahoy sat staring at the red stain of the spilled wine, as if it had been the blood flowing from the old unhealed heart-wound suddenly bared anew to him. This outburst of despairing wrath and bitterness, leaping out like a jet of lava at white heat, checked the words upon his lips. And he had thought that he knew Richard Skene, and had regretted that the schoolboy friend of long ago was becoming more and more merged in the precise, formal Laird of Strode. He must have been moved to the very depths before he could utter that name, unspoken for long years—Mary Erskine—the gentle girl who had been swept off her feet by Adrian Skene's impulsive wooing, and who, though she had adored her husband, had never perhaps quite understood him, any more than he had comprehended her.

Dick Dalmahoy turned and looked for a moment at the tall, thin figure standing framed in the long window against the night sky and the faint stars. Amazement and deep pity held him silent, crossed by the darting, incongruous thought that on the morrow Skene would bitterly resent this sudden self-revelation. For all that, his heart was very full as he approached the silent figure.

"Skene," he said—and it required some courage to utter the words he did—"you've had hard measure meted out to you, but I've aye thought you over hard on your cousin Adrian. I believe he loved his wife, though I'd never say he was the right man for her, still, if more time had been granted him, well—well"—as Mr. Skene stirred and thrust out a passionate hand, as if fiercely repudiating the thought—"we'll say no more of that. You've aye thought of Adrian as the son of the man whose death even could not wipe out his offence against you, though I think we might well leave him now to the judgment of his Maker. But what of Mary's plea, when at the last she begged for your protection for her boy? It was for 'Mary Erskine's son,' not for the last of the Skenes. Could woman have paid a finer tribute to your love and her trust in it? Have you forgotten that? Are you keeping faith with her now when you cut her son adrift, because he wouldn't do your bidding in a matter where, if a man's a man at all, he feels he has a right to choose for himself?"

Dalmahoy paused. He had used the one plea likely to pierce through to that core of fire which he now knew had smouldered through all the years under the chill outer crust. And he had reached it.

"Forgotten! Do you think I have ever forgotten? Let my right hand forget her cunning—" Skene faced round, and his look revealed how fiercely that hidden fire had

burned—how the old love had contended with jealousy and pride.

"Rick," cried Dalmahoy, on a sudden impulse, "you're fighting against yourself. It's not the first time that Mary's memory has pled with you. I believe in your heart you are willing to listen if you would but yield to it."

His old friend bent a strange look on him, the tense lips parted, but no words came; then he abruptly turned away and stood silent, gazing out at the darkling autumn hills, brooding vast and solemn under the stars, at the faint, steely glint of the river running broad and strong in the valley beneath. The hills of home, his native glen, the swift, rejoicing river—next to his one ill-fated love, these had held the first place in Richard Skene's deep, narrow, tenacious heart. As his eyes followed the familiar waving outline of the hills, only a deeper shadow against the sky, was he thinking of one who, though differing from him in every other point as only one radically dissimilar nature can differ from another, had still shared with him this silent passion, this inborn clinging to the home of his race?

Five years ago he and his cousin's son, the younger Adrian, had parted in hot anger, though the final breach was but the culmination of the long inevitable jarring between minds of such differing types, heightened on the elder man's side by corroding prejudice, full-fed from old springs of bitterness. Had the spell of these long unspoken words, "Mary Erskine's son," indeed had power now to open a fount of sweet waters which could at last overflow the bitter, and to awaken tender memories from out the blighted years?

Looking out from the warmth and comfort enclosed by these glowing, wine-dark walls behind him into the immensity of night above the silent hills before which human strife and passion dim and dwindle, was Richard Skene asking himself whether, if Adrian had been impulsive and visionary, hot upon all his new-fangled dreams, he had always had justice dealt out to him? Did he wonder how the exile might be faring, or where he might be beneath the wide-spread wings of darkness? Had Dalmahoy been right—had some breath from the past blown upon that arid heart, reviving and softening it, though the will still kept its icy grasp? Who could tell?

Dalmahoy, to whom the silence was growing unbearable, came a step nearer. Mr. Skene stirred slightly, as one might when half aroused from a dream.

"Mary Erskine's son"—Mary's son," he murmured to himself, as a man utters some soothing spell.

Then suddenly he wheeled right round, his hands grasping vaguely as if for some support. In his widely-opened eyes was the look of one face to face with something long expected and awaited. They met his old friend's startled, anxious gaze, and he made a convulsive effort to speak.

"Tell—tell—" The broken words trailed off into a long, rasping, choking breath—a sound which chills the marrow and which, once heard, can never be forgotten.

The tall figure wavered and seemed to shrink together, as Dalmahoy, after one horrified second, sprang forward, caught the falling body, and gently guided it to the floor.

It did not need the verdict of the doctors, summoned in hot haste by half-a-dozen galloping grooms, to tell him that his friend of a lifetime was dead, and that Strode was awaiting a new owner.

CHAPTER II.

To and fro in the great hall, between the fire gleam and the shadows, Lesley Home was slowly walking up and down. The house, always silent with that silence with which a rich man can so easily surround himself—the silence of thick walls and massive doors, of deep-piled carpets and curtains, and the noiseless comings and goings of velvet-footed domestics—was hushed to-night to a deeper quiet. The stillness was something palpable, something which forced itself upon the attention. To-morrow the Laird of Strode would go forth for the last time. He would be laid with his fathers in the ruined nave of the old cathedral church at Dunkeith, but to-night he still held state in the old house which had once been his, and which in the majesty of Death he yet possessed.

Lesley had come from the death-chamber, where she had looked her last look upon the still face. Though the high peace of death had descended upon it, it still bore the marks of earth and of time in the deep lines which bitter brooding rather than the years had graven upon it. She had sought the chamber of the dead with the honest desire to leave behind her in that august presence the lingering sense of injustice, of wrong wantonly done to her maiden pride, which had rankled sorely enough at times, ever since her Cousin Adrian, as she called him, had departed so abruptly from Strode. For her uncle she could not feel more than the natural sorrow and awe at the sudden rupture of a lifelong tie of daily association, though he had been kind after his cold, indifferent fashion. She had stolen from the quiet room at last with a sob which was one of pity rather than of grief.

"Poor Uncle Richard! I pray God that he has found the happiness he seemed always to miss in life," was her parting thought.

Now, as she paced the hall, the future thrust out the past. It was the new chapter which was just about to open rather than that which was closing which held her thoughts. In this, though she chid herself remorsefully for it, she was but sharing the feelings of all to whom the name of Skene of Strode was one to conjure with. In farm and cothouse, up and down the long valley or scattered among the hills, in the old town of Dunkeith, everywhere the passing sigh of regret for the old master was quickening to the throb of expectation of the new. And who would that new master be, or would it be a mistress rather, who would reign at Strode, was the question which was hotly debated at the dinner-tables of the neighbouring

gentry, down through every rank and grade of life to the taproom of the village inn or the wayside smithy, where each discussed it after his or her kind.

Lesley was quite aware of the gossip, and the consciousness of it brought every now and then a hot stain of red to her pale cheeks as she paced steadily up and down. The matter had never been broached to her. She was supposed to know nothing of it, but though the least precocious of girls and infinitely more occupied with her fishing and her gardening, the training of Sheila's puppies, or the rearing of the pheasant chicks, than with such far-away things as love and marriage, she had known by some instinct that she had been offered to her cousin Adrian and had been refused, that he had thrown away a great inheritance since it was burdened by such a condition. Nor had there been lacking hints and chance words which had amply confirmed her instinctive knowledge. Pride had closed her lips on her sense of injustice and her hot anger—anger which at first had burned as fiercely against Adrian as against her uncle. The latter, in the depths of her heart, she had perhaps never wholly forgiven, until an hour ago, when she had softly laid the sheet again over the marble-still face, though on the surface they had, after a time, been good friends enough, especially since he had let her taste the pleasures of responsibility, and had given her a chance to develop her practical capacity. But with Adrian her humour and her sense of justice had soon come to her aid.

"Poor fellow; why should I be hurt because he wouldn't marry me?" she had once said, laughingly, to Lady Marchmont. "I was only a schoolgirl—you remember how I clung to my short skirts—or a schoolboy rather. We liked each other immensely, and I missed him dreadfully for many a day, but I should simply have laughed if he had spoken to me of marriage. It would have been like marrying my big brother, and I daresay he regarded me as a good sort of fellow for my age."

Lesley had been perfectly sincere in her protest, but sincerity may have more sides than one, and now, as she listened for the sound of wheels, her thoughts went out more and more to the cousin who had once filled so large a part of her life, and had so suddenly vanished from it, save in memory. In the silence these memories came thronging back thicker and faster. Ay, and softer and tenderer, too. Oh, what good days they had had together! She might jestingly say that Adrian had treated her as a younger brother, but in her heart she knew that it was not so. At times, in the fierce independence of a very young girl, she had girded at his carefulness for her, though, as she had truly said, she had missed it dreadfully when he was gone. Gone—after a strange, abrupt parting which she had long wondered over, but which she now throbbingly recalled. He had found her in the garden, busy planning some rearrangement of the beds, and had caught her hands and merely said, "Good-bye, I must be going." But he had stood gazing into her face, as though he were

searching for something there. Then he had dropped her hands with a muttered word she did not catch, and had turned away before, in her surprise, she could ask him where he was going, or how long he would be away. Ah, if she had known then that it would be for years—but now he was coming back!

Suddenly, in a surge of mingled feeling, she caught up a lamp and crossed the hall towards the dim recess, where the portrait of Adrian Skene, the elder, hung. She held up the light to the dark, debonair face, still smiling its easy, careless smile, though the man himself was dust, and stood looking long and steadily at it. She was perhaps trying to reconstruct the image of her Cousin Adrian which had remained with her through the years, or else she was trying to picture the Adrian whom she would soon have to meet.

A slight commotion behind her made her turn swiftly round. In her absorption the light roll of the wheels, the trot of the horse, had passed unheard. The big double doors were already flung open. Out of the square of misty, midnight blackness which they disclosed a tall figure was advancing—a stranger surely—no, it must be—

"Adrian!"

The cry was forced from her by his sudden, unlooked-for appearance, and by that strange rising excitement which she could neither repress nor understand, and which from her quick-beating heart thrilled in her voice and shone in her eyes.

For a moment she stood still, holding the lamp aloft. During the long, dark journey Adrian Skene had had his own thoughts of what it would mean to him to stand in the old hall at Strode once more, but in that instant sheer wonder blotted all else from his mind. Who was this—this tall, splendid young creature, wearing her sweeping folds of black like a royal robe, and holding her head high as if its burnished, ruddy coils were a crown royal? In the strong shower of light from the uplifted lamp the young, round neck and the fair face showed privet-white against their swart setting. With the next breath their eyes met—that delicate, virginal whiteness was drowned in the sudden uprush of the quick, bright blood, spreading its vivid glow over throat and cheek and brow.

Who could this be? Not surely little Lesley Home—though in truth "little" was a word which could never literally be applied to her—his little comrade and good friend of long ago, till he had suddenly been bidden to regard her as—

The wonder had lasted but an instant. Already Lesley had handed the lamp to a servant, and was coming towards him with extended hand. He glanced at its strong, shapely whiteness with a grotesque, darting recollection of the traces which "little Lesley's" hands used frequently to bear of her varied outdoor pursuits, before he could respond to the conventional:

"You are very late; I am afraid your train must have been dreadfully delayed," which seemed all she could find to say.

"It was late, but one is prepared for that on our good old dawdling line. But I was not prepared to find anyone awaiting me. It was very good of you, if it was really for me you were waiting, that is," he answered with equal originality; but then he was somewhat thrown off his balance, and was in doubt whether to tone his reply to her formal words or to her look and that sudden flush which had curiously stirred him.

"If one sets out to wait for anyone, one feels bound somehow to see it out," said Lesley, rather coldly. She could have beaten herself for that sudden tingling blush, which still seemed to scorch her, and for the "missishness" which prevented her from uttering the few words of warm, simple welcome which should have been so easy to say. And yet was she so much to blame? How welcome a man to what might be his own house—how refer to the past or to his long absence, when each knew what had caused it—how even say a kindly word of the dead, knowing all that lay between him and the living. Lesley at least felt herself incapable of it, and all the more with Adrian's eyes fixed upon her. Like her, he was perhaps trying to piece the present to the past.

This was neither the Adrian of the portrait nor of her vague dreams and memories. He had his father's features, modified somewhat by the stronger mould of the Skene strain, his father's dark colouring, but the gay, easy triumph on the pictured face was lacking. Instead the living one had a look of weariness, which seemed to go deeper than the fatigue of a long hurried journey warranted; and the eyes, which Lesley remembered as dreamy yet fiery—a spark through a cloud—had lost that quick, vivifying gleam. But it was idle to judge anyone after twelve hours, or more it might be, of constant travelling. She would likely have to recast all her ideas to-morrow; meantime the greatest kindness she could do him was to leave him in peace. But before she could speak Adrian exclaimed:

"And you are really Lesley—*little* Lesley!" with a sudden, illuminating smile which proved him to be his father's son. The weariness vanished from his eyes, though it might still linger in the lines about the sensitive mouth.

"I am certainly not *little* Lesley any longer, if ever I was. Do you remember how angry I used to be when you called me so, and treated me like a child, as I thought." Then the quick smile which the words had called up vanished. "We shall have to make each other's acquaintance to-morrow," the touch of ceremony returning to her voice. "But you must be dead-tired, I am sure. Soames has everything ready for you. I thought you would like to have your old room again. I am glad you were able to reach here in time," she added after a moment, in a vain attempt to atone for a reception, which she confusedly felt had been at once too warm and too cold.

"Thank you; it was kind of you to remember the old room," said Adrian. He had averted his eyes to the heaped logs under the cavernous canopy of the fireplace. "It has cer-

tainly been a long day. Dalmahoy's letters and telegrams seem to have been wandering about a good deal before they reached me, but I am glad to be here, as you say—in time. After all, it is much only to be here again." And his eyes kindled in the old way as they flashed a quick look round the vast, dim space, with here a half-seen face looking down from the shadows, there a sudden gleam of steel as polished helmet or morion caught the flicker of the flames.

Something in his look and tone touched Lesley to the quick and shook her out of the dumb constraint which held her.

"I hope you will always be here, Cousin Adrian. I hope that you have come *home*," she exclaimed warmly, heartily, cordially, and stretching out an impulsive hand. Afterwards she was glad, very glad, that she had said it.

CHAPTER III.

"EARTH to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The old cathedral bell, which had called so many generations to pray, had tolled through the dense white smother of autumn mist which lay thick and heavy over hill and valley like the cere-cloth upon a dead man's face, moulding and yet muffling every feature—that dead man's, it might be, whose passing breath had given speech to the iron tongue of the bell, booming its message far and wide over the broad lands which so short a time ago men had still called his.

At last it was all over. Richard Skene had been laid with his fathers, the vault had been closed again, and the great concourse of tenants and onlookers, the long train of neighbours and acquaintances—save Dick Dalmahoy it may be doubted if Richard Skene had ever had a friend—had slowly dispersed. By some Adrian had been greeted with warm cordiality; others had availed themselves of "the melancholy occasion" to limit their salutes to what civility demanded. They, like most of the tenantry, felt conscious of a dilemma. The young man had filled the place of chief mourner—that could hardly be denied to him—but who could tell whether Richard Skene had relented at the last, whether they saw before them the new Laird of Strode, the arbiter of fate to so many of them, or whether they must carry their homage elsewhere. Those who were near enough eagerly scanned the grave, dark features, like and yet so unlike "his forbears," in search of some clue, but they could read nothing there.

At that moment Adrian Skene was not thinking of himself, cause enough though he had to do so. Standing by the vault in the hoary, roofless aisle, while the spectral mist crept in around slender shaft and broken arch, and the slow, heavy drip, drip of the moisture from every lichened ledge and lintel could be heard in every pause of the service—the only tears likely to be shed at this burial—he was honestly trying to keep the past and the future out of his mind. So much honour he would strive to pay to the dead. Between Richard

Skene and himself there had been no love lost, nor even liking, but with that open grave at his feet, a factor which so strangely alters the values of human things, he may have wished that he had been more forbearing, that he had dealt more gently with the dead. At least he could feel profound pity for the man who, though a crowd had come to bury him, had lived so lonely a life, and however he might have marred the hopes of others, had had but bleak disappointment for his own portion.

But when Strode was reached again, even Mr. Dalmahoy's keen, trained scrutiny could read no more in the young man's face than the eager eyes which had peered through the baffling mists in the cathedral aisle.

"H'm, there's where breed tells. Cool as he looks, there's no man alive but would be on thorns to know what is in these papers," ruffling the edges of the leaves before him with an uneasy hand. "Oh, my poor old friend, I wish you had left this task to any man but me, or rather that you had left it to no one. I wonder how it looks from the other side, if you know anything of it, that is," the lawyer was thinking as he studied the face and figure once so familiar.

There was little fault to find with either. Adrian had the stately height of all the Skenes, but he carried it with an easy grace, which, like his dark colouring, he owed to the dash of Southern blood in his veins.

"A fine fellow, though he has none of his father's way with him. All the better without it, maybe, though he looks over-old for his years. The wide world and freedom isn't a well-lined nest like Strode, as no doubt he's found out. They'd make a braw pair"—his thoughts ran with seeming irrelevance—"but neither of them is likely to see that any the clearer for having a pistol put to their heads."

Out of the great gathering in the kirkyard it was but a small company which was assembled in the library, where Richard Skene had spent the greater part of his days, and where his austere presence still seemed to linger. The big writing-table was cumbered yet with his books and papers, arranged in the precise order which he loved. The lofty walls were lined with books, chiefly bound in old-fashioned pale leather, and carpet and hangings had faded to the same neutral drab hue. In the cold light filtering through the white mist lying close and thick beyond the tall windows, the room had a dreary, chilly effect, which not even a generous fire could brighten.

Beside the lawyer and Adrian, there were present only a kindly, fidgety, elderly man, whom the latter knew well as Lord Polmont, and a tall, vigorous-looking man, the tan of whose bronzed face seemed the deeper for a pair of very keen light-blue eyes and his reddish fair hair. Mr. Dalmahoy introduced him as "Sir Neil Wedderburne," adding, somewhat awkwardly, "a newcomer since your day, Mr. Adrian."

Then there was a pause, during which Sir Neil regarded Adrian with even greater earnestness than Mr. Dalmahoy. It would certainly have aroused the younger man's at-

tention and awakened some surprise had not his thoughts been too busy. The pride which, to Mr. Dalmahoy's admiration, masked his feelings had kept him through all the years from vain speculations as to the future or unworthy hankerings after dead men's shoes, but Adrian Skene would not have been human—and he was very human indeed—had he not felt that life was at a crisis, and held his breath before the issues at stake. For all his outward calm, he was conscious that he had less grip of himself when he was like to need it most. The return to the old home of his race, unseen so long save in dreams, the sight of his father's brilliant face veiled by the shadows of its dim corner, the thoughts and the memories which he had carried away from the kirkyard aisle, all had shaken him more than he cared to admit. Above all the apparition of the new Lesley which had startled him the night before had compelled a difficult readjustment of ideas. He would fain have seen her that morning, but the old Scottish custom enforced an almost Oriental seclusion upon the women of a household on a funeral day, and Lesley, believing that her uncle would have liked her to conform to the old fashion, had remained with Lady Marchmont until the long procession had started upon its slow way.

The door opened. Adrian looked up with a start and, with the other men, rose to his feet, as Miss Home entered with old Lady Marchmont leaning more heavily than usual upon her arm. The white ghostly light would have made many a fair enough face look dull and sallow, but Lesley's faint bloom and the warm glow of her hair seemed to gain in purity and depth from the chill effect of the mist without, and from the low-toned background of these rows upon rows of pallid, unused books.

Sir Neil Wedderburne evidently appreciated the contrast, for a sapphire gleam kindled in his eyes as she passed him with a silent bow.

But for Lady Marchmont convention did not exist, unless when it so pleased her. She dropped Lesley's arm and crossed the room to Adrian, holding out her little old jewelled hands, which quivered like sere aspen leaves.

"My dear boy, why didn't you come to see me this morning?" she exclaimed. "When I sent for you it was too late. I am glad to see you here again, though I wish some other cause had brought you. Poor Richard has given me a great shock. A man at his years has no right to die, and no need to die, if only he cares enough to go on living. Oh, yes, Mr. Dalmahoy," as the lawyer gave a little dry professional cough, "you can go on. You will have it all your own way now, so you need not grudge me a few words, since we are all friends here." The smile with which she surveyed the company had an ironic tinge, as her eyes passed from Adrian to Sir Neil.

But having received this permission, and the rustle of Lady Marchmont's silk and crape having subsided, Mr. Dalmahoy seemed for a moment unable to break the silence which ensued. At last he said, in a nervous, difficult voice, very unlike his usual full, even tones:

"I have ventured to restrict the company



"Who is this lady?"—p. 118.

present as far as possible, as the will which I have now to read is of so peculiar and—er—personal a nature that, though it would be irregular, I would fain have communicated its contents to the possible legatees separately, but I am debarred from this course. Lord Polmont and Sir Neil Wedderburne," with a bow to each gentleman, "are nominated for positions of trust, if they choose to accept them, and are therefore present."

Again there was a pause. No one spoke or moved, and yet a shock, a thrill, palpably stirred the silence.

"As I was with the testator during the last hours of his life, I should like to state," resumed Mr. Dalmahoy, in a voice in which formality and feeling were oddly blended, "that I have some cause to believe that his views had been somewhat changing and—er—softening, and that if time had been granted to him, we might have had other dispositions to consider to-day. Of course all that is surmise, and we have nothing to do except with the document which I am now about to read, but I have stated my impressions as gathered from the deceased's last words, for what they are worth, as I thought it desirable that those concerned should know."

He glanced at Adrian, but the young man's eyes were fixed on the Skene coat-of-arms, carved on the chimney-piece. To all appearance he was more intent upon following out its lines than on Mr. Dalmahoy's words, but the supple, well-shaped hand lying loosely on his knee had clenched itself tight and hard. Mr. Dalmahoy lifted the document, adjusted his eyeglass, and began to read. A long breath went round. The best or the worst would be known now.

There was a long list of minor bequests and charitable legacies before the gist of the will was reached.

"And I give and bequeath the entire residue of my estate, heritable and personal" (here followed another long list of subjects, including the estates and mansion house of Strode and funded money, a fortune in itself) "to Adrian Skene, the only son of my first cousin, Adrian Skene, on the condition"—involuntarily Mr. Dalmahoy paused, again there was a quick breath, though everyone sat statue-still—"that within a year he shall marry my niece, Lesley Home. As the last male of our name and of the direct line, I give to the said Adrian Skene this final opportunity of carrying out my deepest and most earnest desire, which is already well known to him, but should he fail or refuse to implement this condition, I give and bequeath my whole estate as above stated to my said niece, Lesley Home, for her sole and absolute use—"

"One moment, Mr. Dalmahoy." Adrian Skene rose suddenly; his voice, breaking in on the even, monotonous flow of the lawyer's, was clear and steady, though his face had that curious dry pallor which a dark skin shows when the blood suddenly drains away from it.

Before he could utter another word, two voices rose in altercation beyond the door, one, a servant's, hushed and decorous, the other, a

woman's, light, high, and evidently excited. Every face was turned to the door in frowning surprise at this strange and unseemly interruption, when the handle was wrenched round, the door flung open, and with Soames' shocked, protesting face for a background, a tall, slight girl stood on the threshold. Her copper-hued hair, brought down over her ears in heavy waving bands, framed a small oval face, the slightly sallow skin of which had the waxen smoothness of a gardenia petal. She wore what seemed somewhat hastily improvised mourning. A Gainsborough fichu of black, ruffled gauze draped her slight shoulders, and her broad hat was tied under the white, pointed chin with long streaming ends of black chiffon—a sombre setting which gave full significance to the little pale face and the striking hair.

For one second she stood there, her hands, in their long black elbow gloves, resting on each door-post. Stooping forward, she looked round in pathetic appeal, while the little company within stared at her, too dumb-struck by surprise to connect this startling apparition with one of their number.

Mr. Dalmahoy found voice first.

"Soames, you know that we are most particularly engaged—who is this lady?" he exclaimed, as if voicing the ruffled majesty of the law.

"She is my wife!" answered Adrian, in a voice half haughty, half defiant.

"My wife!" The two words dropped into the wondering silence as a stone plunges into a still pool, setting the waters rocking. Unheeding, he made a swift step forward as, in a flute-like tone of entreaty, the girl cried "Adrian!" and fluttered across the room to his side.

Now the open-eyed stare was transferred to the young man. His face was one dark flush, it might be of shame or of anger or shock, but though he could not control the swift rush of blood, his features still kept their set, proud quiescence.

His wife! Mr. Dalmahoy whipped from his place and slapped the door to in the face of Soames, too amazed or too interested to close it. Lord Polmont forgot to fidget with his eyeglass and stood, with bulging eyes, gaping like a cod-fish. Lady Marchmont, for once in her life, had nothing to say, but sat, as if petrified, gazing at the intruder through her long-handled glass.

His wife! Sir Neil shot one glance from Adrian to Lesley, then he hastily averted his gaze and stared hard at the faded carpet, lest anyone should catch the gleam of hope and exultation in his eyes.

While Mr. Dalmahoy, as the mouthpiece of fate, had uttered his momentous periods, Lesley had flushed hot and high; now she had paled to the dead whiteness of the blurring mist without, but her head seemed held a trifle higher, and she still kept her erect, easy pose.

"Oh, I'm afraid I shouldn't have come," the newcomer broke the brief silence with her plaintive, child-like voice and with a timid glance around. "I've made you angry, Adrian, but it isn't my fault, really—really it isn't."

Father insisted that I ought to be here with you. He quite put me into the train, he did, indeed. I've had such a journey. I thought I should never reach you, and when I heard you were here, though the man said you were engaged, I couldn't help coming in. I am sure you will forgive me—"

"I certainly did not expect to see you here, Alys," said Adrian quietly, checking this *ingénue* outburst as soon as he could, "but you have merely anticipated the explanation I was just about to make"—he took her hand in his and turned towards Mr. Dalmahoy—"an explanation I should perhaps have made sooner, but there has been no time since last night to speak of my own concerns, even if there had seemed any need for it. If I could have known the contents of my late cousin's will, and the signal honour he designed for me, my cousin, Miss Home, might have been spared some annoyance. As it is, the will in no way further concerns me. With your permission, my wife" (again with a faint, haughty emphasis on the word) "and I will leave you to finish this business, which has been too much interrupted already."

"Oh, you poor misguided boy!" almost shrieked Lady Marchmont, in her utter dismay forgetful of or wholly indifferent to the timid, shrinking air of the slender figure in its somewhat fantastic garb and the wistful look in the newcomer's light, singularly limpid grey eyes. In spite of that dismay, the old woman's quick glance showed that for the moment she was more concerned with the drama of the situation than with its consequences—one reason, perhaps, why she could carry her age and its many experiences so lightly. Lesley caught that forlorn look, but before she could speak Adrian went on:

"I have only to congratulate my Cousin Lesley on her splendid inheritance, which I am sure she will administer far better than I could—if there had ever been any question of me"—smiling into the girl's eyes. He lifted her hand and would have kissed it, and a sudden gleam shot from Alys Skene's grey eyes. But Lesley's strong white fingers closed suddenly upon his. Her native generosity was afire, fanned by warring gusts of emotion, which she had no time to analyse, and would not if she could.

"But I cannot let you go, Cousin Adrian. We were good friends once—I hope we shall always be friends—and I have your—wife's acquaintance to make"—was there the faintest effort to utter the word? "But we cannot part, we cannot leave this room till something is done. This will be cruel—horribly unjust—but it is utterly foolish too—for what of me? Was I to have no voice in the matter? Have I no will of my own, that my uncle thought he could dispose of me in this fashion? What of me?" she exclaimed imperially, her head high, the spark in her eyes kindling to a flame.

Then she closed her lips hard upon a rush of passionate words. The man who had put this cruel slight upon her was dead, and how could she discuss her possible attitude towards

her cousin and the choice which he had never offered her, with his wife standing by and regarding her and Adrian by turns with wide, wondering, childlike eyes.

"There are provisions for that—we have not reached them yet, though they are a dead letter now," put in Mr. Dalmahoy as she paused.

But Lesley's blood was up. At least she must insist upon plain justice, whatever her own feelings might be.

"But apart from that, there must be something we could do to redress this—this hateful injustice," she began again, in a tone which she strove to make cool and dispassionate. "I cannot, I will not, rob my cousin. You said just now, Mr. Dalmahoy, that my uncle had changed his mind—"

"Maybe"—cautiously. "I hope he did, Miss Lesley, but unfortunately he had no time to change his will, and that is all that concerns us," broke in Mr. Dalmahoy, tapping the parchment before him.

"But I don't understand—is there nothing at all for you, Adrian?" murmured Alys, in a bewildered fashion, which made good Lord Polmont drop his eyeglass and murmur, "Poor little thing."

"Come, Alys, I am afraid we are doing something almost as heinous as interfering with the course of justice," said Adrian almost lightly—despair brings its own courage, but the sooner this was over the better. "My apologies again for this interruption"—with a glance towards the others, which no one was very ready to meet—"and once more my hearty congratulations to you, Lesley, and even more—to Strode."

He lifted to his lips the hand which, all unconsciously, Lesley had left in his, and, preceded by his wife, who went with lingering step and backward glance, he quitted the room.

CHAPTER IV.

"AND that is absolutely all I can do!" said Lesley with a quick, sharp sigh of hurt and irate disappointment.

"I am afraid it is," said Mr. Dalmahoy reluctantly. "I have no idea how your plan might appear to Mr. Adrian. Of course, it would be a provision and an occupation," he went on slowly, "and that might mean a great deal. I know nothing of his affairs, and he is not inclined to speak of them. Still, a lad who has never been trained to anything in particular doesn't drop into a soft berth very readily, and unless you're one of the big-wigs, I fancy that Sir Walter's saying is as true as ever—that literature is an excellent staff but a very poor crutch. There's his love of Strode, too, that might count for much," meditatively. "No doubt there's much to say for the plan, still there are a great many 'buts' on the other side, as I daresay you know as well as I. I would advise you to think it well over; it's not a matter to be rushed."

"Since it is the only thing I can do, I would rather do it at once," said Lesley mutinously, "and who knows whether Adrian will stay on

here while I am debating and considering the only paltry reparation I can make. Reparation!" scornfully. "It is no reparation. Adrian will rather be doing me a favour if he consents."

"Your trustees may take a different view. It seems to me you are inclined to forget their existence and their functions," smiling.

Lesley's round, young neck erected itself somewhat.

"I don't see what objection they could make, and in any case they would hardly go against my express wish."

"They might well suggest that the business of a great estate can't be learnt in a day, and Mr. Adrian was never over practical, though I daresay he's got cured of a young man's whimsies. But, mind, I'm not arguing against the plan, and at least it could do no harm if you were to sound Mr. Adrian. If he won't, why, then there's an end of it. We have so far finished our business for this morning if you would like to see him here."

"Oh, no, not here!" exclaimed Lesley hastily, looking round the library with a shiver of repulsion.

It would be cruel to discuss such a subject with Adrian here. The pale, prim room must be as hateful to him as to her. No, it could not be. Heavy though the blow was which he had had to face yesterday, he had not had to endure a woman's humiliation. Would she ever be able to enter that room again without feeling the tingling flame of shame and anger course through her veins and scorch her face anew? All the more reason, then, for carrying out her plan if Adrian would but consent to it. How better could she prove to the world (every term is comparative, and for the moment "the world" meant to Lesley her own wide Highland shire and the great web of distant Skene connections) that, in spite of everything, she and her cousin were good friends, simply good friends as they had always been, and that there was no foundation for that foolish old gossip which this monstrous will would of course revive and intensify tenfold?

The renewed prick to her pride only gave added force to her determination, if that were needed, and a sharper edge of decision to her voice as she repeated:

"Not here, certainly, but I think I saw Adrian go along the terrace a while ago. I daresay I shall find him somewhere."

As she left the room, Mr. Dalmahoy gathered his papers together, pursing his lips and shaking his head.

"A wilful woman must e'en have her way, I suppose. It's little wonder she has taken the bit in her teeth, and when that's the case, where's the good of advice? I wish I could think that Adrian would see one of the 'buts' as clearly as I do, but like enough he'll be as blind as she is—there was always a streak of the Quixote in him. But, after all, it's the third party who's like to give the casting vote. It's that wisp of a thing he was so left to himself as to marry who'll decide. I doubt if Miss Lesley has given her a thought yet, but for all her big eyes and her plaintive pipe, I

shouldn't wonder if we had all to take her into account by and by. And to think he might have had Lesley Home! Well, well, marriage is a queer thing!" and shaking his head again over this inscrutable mystery, Mr. Dalmahoy tied up his papers.

The sunny length of the terrace was empty when Lesley emerged upon it, save for a fine sable collie, lying dozing upon the warm flags. It yawned and stretched itself, and thumped a welcoming tail, keeping a watchful eye upon her as she stood for a moment undecided. Then, with a sigh for the time when she might dispense with frocks of ceremony and don a short, serviceable tweed again, she threw her long trailing black skirt over her arm and went swiftly along the terrace. Coolin cocked an ear and trotted after her, but when she turned the corner of the house he broke into a joyous bark and bounded on ahead. She was really going for a walk, then, that morning walk which he had given up in despair.

They passed the ivy-clasped shell of the massive old tower, the stronghold of the race in the dim, far-off days of "sturt and strife." From its broken wall the ground fell sheer away to a deep rocky ravine, down which a stream from the high moors poured its amber waters, and leaped and spouted amid boulder and bracken, hurrying to join the broad river in the strath below. Midway on the airy bridge which spanned the gully Lesley made an involuntary pause, the result of life-long habit, to watch the sunshine strike a sparkle from the water, the hue of a cairngorm stone in the light, as it leaped from ledge to ledge, down and ever down.

Beyond the bridge the path climbed upward through a pinewood, the breeze stirring the dark, dry branches above to a long, sighing murmur like the ceaseless sob of the sea, while the tall, ruddy trunks, like the slender shafts of a colonnade, framed enchanting vistas of moor and valley. For the white, fleecy mist which yesterday had lain so dense and heavy over the face of the land was gone, as though it never had been, revealing not only the "body of heaven in its clearness," but the earth beneath in a new splendour of light and colour. Down in the valley the river flashed sapphire over the shallows, or glowed a clear topaz-brown in the deep, shaded pools. The meadows which bordered it showed a gem-like greenness against the sombre firwoods, amid which, here and there, a birch tree shook out its yellow tresses on a rowan flamed red.

Higher still, and the trees grew scant and stunted, the withered, tortured branches, the network of grappling roots, and a riven trunk standing white and ghastly here and there, bearing witness to their struggle for existence when the winter storms were unleashed and careered snow-laden over these vast, shelterless spaces. But to-day the wind which sang over the rolling moors was still a summer breeze, though the brief purple glory of the heather had given place to the russet of the faded bracken.

A few steps more, and Lesley topped the first swell of the moor and paused to drink

down a deep draught of the hill air, blowing clean and pure over unbroken miles of fern and gale and heather. Fronting her, and far to the north, rose the mighty peaks in whose rocky fastnesses the river had its birth. Stern, storm-riven giants, but to-day floating like an ethereal vision of pearly lights and shadows against the tender lilac haze into which the stainless blue of the upper heavens merged towards the horizon.

As she had expected, there was Adrian, lying a few paces off, flung full length upon the deep, springy heather, with its faint, dry, aromatic breath, the most restful couch to wearied brain as well as to tired body. His eyes were fixed on those far peaks, so serene, so infinitely remote from daily strife and tumult, as a man might gaze on the face of a long-unseen friend.

"I thought I should find you here!" exclaimed Lesley, her step unheard upon the hill grass and heather.

Adrian faced quickly round and sprang to his feet. In his eyes there was still a faint suggestion of that surprise which every fresh sight of his Cousin Lesley had still power to awaken, but that apart, her tall figure, standing out in its dead, heavy black with only the airy blue for a background, struck a note of startling effect amid the opulent autumn colouring.

"I must seem rather a deserter," said Adrian, smiling, "but I have promised my wife to take her a tour of inspection in the afternoon. She is tired this morning after her journey, so I came up here—"

"To be alone," Lesley finished the sentence. "If you wanted to be quite safe, you shouldn't have chosen one of our old haunts. When I could not find you about the house, I felt pretty certain that you would be here. You see, I haven't forgotten," valiantly returning his smile.

Instinctively she felt that the only safe ground on which they could meet was that of the old easy, cousinly friendship; everywhere else pitfalls of embarrassment lurked. Although she was not looking at him, she felt that Adrian flushed when he spoke of his wife's journey, though from his tone her arrival might have been of the most everyday kind, fully expected and prepared for.

"You have a good successor to Coolin," said Adrian, as the collie, which had been ranging the moor in wide circles, came up panting, and, after warily sniffing at the stranger, apparently accepted him as a friend.

"You have a better memory for his name than for himself," said Lesley, stroking the smooth head thrust under her hand.

"Is it possible that that is Coolin?" exclaimed Adrian.

"Why not?" said Lesley. "He was quite a young dog when—I've had him a good many years," she hastily amended her sentence. "He is getting an old dog now, more's the pity—eh, Coolin?" as the collie turned his beautiful, wistful brown eyes upon her face.

"It makes what seems a lifetime into a thing of yesterday," said Adrian abruptly, and

for a moment there was silence, save for the whisper of the breeze through the sere bracken.

Lesley had sat down upon a ledge of granite cropping out through the heather, and busied herself removing the withered sprigs which had clung to her sweeping skirts.

"I wonder why it is that every possible occasion of sorrow or rejoicing in this life should, for us poor women, have some needless worry about clothes tacked on to it," she said with a slight laugh, and then added, "I am glad to hear that—Alys is resting. She was wise not to come down this morning, but there is no hurry for the tour of inspection. I hope she will have plenty of time to make acquaintance with Strode."

She got the name out with rather a rush, much as she might have taken a somewhat stiff fence.

Adrian flashed a look of pleased and grateful surprise at her, though his "You are very kind" was rather formal.

Lesley flung a little handful of dry sprigs to the passing breeze, and, leaning forward slightly, clasped her hands round her knees, an attitude which at once brought "little Lesley" forcibly back to Adrian's mind.

"Adrian, we must understand each other, you and I," she said gravely. "I came up here hoping to find you, that we might have a talk over things. We were good friends, you and I, once," unconsciously falling back upon the words which had leaped to her lips the day before, "and, except that I am five years older, I am still pretty much the Lesley Home I was then. We can still be friends, I hope."

Adrian did not attempt to turn a phrase or to hint at the amazing change which in his eyes the years had wrought. Meeting the girl's candid gaze, he felt that she was right. In childlike sincerity and directness, in clear honesty of purpose, in frank generosity, Miss Home was the unspoiled girl, was "little Lesley" still. Time, which had brought so many new gifts, had taken nothing away.

"I should be proud to have such a friend, Lesley, and, better still—glad," he said, and voice and look gave value to the simple words.

Suddenly he rose and walked a few hasty steps away. He was in an intolerable position! To attempt to explain his boyish quixotry in leaving Strode, or to beg her forgiveness for his unwitting share in the wrong which had been done her, would be to insult this girl who had so bravely offered him her friendship, and to proclaim himself the veriest coxcomb. And yet to utter no word of all that was surging in his heart—He turned back and stood beside her.

"Lesley, from what you said yesterday, I guess what it is you have come to talk over, but I want you to put that out of your mind once and for all. There has been no injustice done to me. I was a hot-headed young fool when I left Strode, full of fine dreams and plans for which the workaday world has no need and no mercy, but whatever mistakes I made, I knew the risk I ran—that my cousin would never forgive me. I suppose I thought then that I could do without his forgiveness, or

that I could compel it! Well," with a shrug which expressed much, "he did not relent—he did not forgive me. I have no right to complain and I do not complain, but"—he paused—"he is dead, yet I find it bitterly hard to forgive him," he added in a low voice. "I would give my right hand to serve you, Lesley, or to have spared you—yesterday—" He stopped.

"But you can serve me!" exclaimed Lesley eagerly. "It is that I want to speak about, Cousin Adrian. Uncle Richard is dead, I am powerless to undo what he has done. I have just been learning my limitations," with a bitter little smile at the recollection of her talk with Mr. Dalmahoy. "Nothing I could say would make you understand how I feel at being forced not only to take all but to keep all—to be able to offer so little." She spoke vehemently, and then suddenly paused. "Would it be a great sacrifice for you to leave London?" she asked abruptly.

Adrian glanced round the sweep of sky, at the familiar hills, and drew in a long breath of the crystal-clear air, as Lesley added quickly, though in evident afterthought:

"Do you think Alys would care to live in the country?"

At that moment, as he recalled the murky yellow haze which for days had overhung the grimy, sweltering city, and through which a sickly, half-seen sun had sent down a heavy, smiting heat, London focussed itself to Adrian in that swarming human ant-hill, the "Mansions," to one of whose innumerable flats or sets of cupboards, rather, he had a month or two ago brought home his wife. Within their bandbox partitions the occupier was made easily free of every sound and smell, not only from the clanging, thronging street without, but from the close-packed life above and below.

"You haven't spent an autumn in town, Lesley, or you wouldn't ask such a question," he said with rather a wry smile. "Would it be a sacrifice to exchange purgatory for paradise—a purgatory without any remedial results, too—worse luck! But it isn't always a stifling September, and I have my work to do. There is nowhere else I could find a market for such wares as I have to offer. As to Alys"—slowly—"really, I hardly know. She is such a little Londoner that as yet, I think, the sea is her only alternative from town."

"I know so little about your work," said Lesley, rather wistfully.

"My work! I fear there is not much to say about it," said Adrian, with his slight involuntary shrug, an inherited habit which had always annoyed Richard Skene, and which he had stigmatised as a "foreign trick." "To supply copy at so much a column has about as much to do with literature as brick-laying with architecture. However, one gets an opportunity at times of laying one's bricks according to one's own fancy, not the stereotyped pattern, and straightway begins to plan 'cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces.' Of course, I count on rearing my palace some day. I am still young enough at the business

for that." The tone was light, but there was no mistaking the hope and the purpose underlying it.

"You must tell me more by and by. As you know, we are not literary people at Strode, so that must be my excuse if what I am going to suggest is quite unsuitable." Lesley paused, and then began again with a slight effort. "Since Captain Grant's death a few months ago my uncle was acting as his own agent, and I think I was not a bad deputy," with a laugh, "but it was too much for poor uncle, and certainly it would be far too much for me. Adrian, will you help me, for I cannot manage alone, and there is a great deal to be done? Uncle Richard was a far more generous landlord than people knew, but there were many things with which he had no sympathy. Do you remember what improvements you used to plan?—we could carry them out together," eagerly. "You would have a free hand. I hoped—I thought you might care to come back to Glen Falla and the hills. Mr. Dalmahoy will explain the business side of it, but Strode is a great empty house for two women, and I hoped that you—and Alys would make your home with us unless you preferred to have Tombreck. You will think it over at least, won't you? There is no need to decide at once," she ended beseechingly.

Adrian was silent for a moment. He knew that his cousin had taken this means of offering him a very handsome income, an honourable position, and an occupation which, though responsible, was to one fitted for it by no means arduous. And there was something inexpressibly winning in the way she had done it, in the contrast between her usual calm, easy decision of manner, and the touch of doubt and hesitation in her voice, the scarcely-veiled suggestion that the conferring of the favour lay with him. The proposal had its temptations, it would relieve at once the wearing, daily pressure of anxiety, it would place in his hands that which he had long vainly coveted, the power to help and influence other lives, but—to give up all his hopes, to come back to Strode under such changed circumstances! He thrust the last thought aside, for he knew it was the consciousness of it which had brought the flush to Lesley's face, the tremor to her voice. But all these considerations mattered little compared with the main question—how could he take advantage of her generosity, how could he accept her charity, for it would be no less?

"Lesley, your plan is as generous as yourself," he exclaimed hastily. "It's not your proposal that is unsuitable, but I who am wholly unfit. You and Strode need someone with experience, and five years of Fleet Street haven't added to any small stock I ever possessed. It was always one of the chief counts in your uncle's indictment that I was so impractical, so little adapted to a country life, and I am afraid Mr. Dalmahoy and your trustees would be of the same opinion."

"Oh, they—" exclaimed Lesley, with a disdainful lift of her head and a quick involuntary gesture as if she were sweeping away

adverse opinions like so many cobwebs. "If that is your only objection—"

"Isn't it enough, even if there were no others? But I am 'thirled' to a very exacting and capricious mistress; the spell of the inkpot is on me, and if it is hard to serve two masters, what about two mistresses?" with rather a would-be laugh. Then, with a sudden change of voice, "Lesley, if I could really serve you, Cod knows I would, but it would be no service to you if I take up a post which some other man could easily fill better. It was more than good of you to think of it, to remember what all this means to me," with another glance round glowing hill and valley. "I thank you with all my heart, but I can never thank you enough—" striving to find warmer words in a vain effort to salve the hurt he knew he was inflicting. "I would not lightly put such an offer aside, but I cannot do what you wish—it would not be right for me—it would not be honourable—"

Lesley's rare vivid flush dyed her face. "I am sorry you think I should ask you to do anything dishonourable," she said in a suppressed voice. The words were almost wilfully perverse, but in her sudden disappointment she could not stay them.

"Lesley!" exclaimed Adrian, "you know I don't mean that. You ask me to serve you, but I know that you would fain do me a service too, and in your kindness you think too well of me. I know what I am fit for, that as an estate agent I should not be worth my salt for months, and if I undertake it, what should I be but—" He stopped abruptly. Such words should not be spoken between them, but what cursed folly had led him almost to the brink of uttering them. The breaking off of his own work would have been reason enough.

But Lesley's instinct divined his thought, as if it had been spoken. She sprang up hastily, ejecting Coolin suddenly from his comfortable couch on her skirt.

"I thought you would have been more generous, Cousin Adrian?" she said in a low voice, as the collic, leaping up, filled the air with a tempest of joyful barks.

CHAPTER V.

"AND this is Strode?" eagerly.

"Yes, this is Strode," absently.

Luncheon over, Alys had instantly claimed the fulfilment of her husband's promise to show her "all his old haunts," so she phrased it, but, away from the house, her interest soon flagged, and Adrian had been a rather silent and abstracted guide. Even the famous garden, falling steeply from the house to the river, terrace below terrace, rose-garlanded or creeper-hung, failed to hold her attention. The contrast between the sombre firwoods, the billowing sweeps of bare moorland, and the wealth of colour and fragrance on this sunny, sheltered slope had seemingly no appeal to her any more than the quaint relics of a bygone taste which had striven to create

the surroundings of a Roman villa in a Highland strath—the exotic shrubs formally trimmed, the carved urns and lichen statues which surmounted each pilastered terrace and flanked the descending flights of mossy steps.

"What a lot of money all this must cost. I am sure I have counted half a dozen gardeners already," had been her chief comment as they had climbed up to the level of the house again.

Now, as they leaned on the balustrade of the uppermost terrace, each had a different picture before the eye. Alys Skene was looking back at the great house—the shaggy fragments of the ancient tower still clinging to the high, narrow, sixteenth-century house with its crow-stepped gables, its small, irregular windows and the shotholes for defence in the lower storey. In quaint contrast with both was the latest addition, the great Georgian building, whose long rows of windows overlooked the terrace. On these Alys's eyes were fixed, but it was with the interior of Strode rather than with its outward aspect that her thoughts were busy, with the great rooms of which, since yesterday, she had caught brief glimpses.

Their size somewhat oppressed her. A whole flat in Mostyn Mansions could have been put into her bedroom, she thought, while the huge bed with its curious hangings, embroidered with a parrot and a poppy—a parrot and a poppy by hands long ago quietly folded—seemed as large as a room. Very old-fashioned, too, she was inclined hastily to pronounce these stately chambers, this being her first experience of a house which has been a centre of family life through long years, and where each generation of men and women, the flower of their day for wit and culture and knowledge of a wider world, have left some tokens of their presence to those who would follow them. Still she was keenly alive to all that Strode represented, and above all to its warmth and comfort. Last night every opening door had revealed a fire sparkling in the autumn dusk. Hot water in abundance seemed always waiting, every want was anticipated without even the need for ringing a bell, a process which, as Alys knew to her cost, had hitherto in her own experience been attended by very doubtful results.

And all this—her eyes roving again over the great, grey pile—and all that it implied, ought to have been Adrian's, might have been Adrian's, but for that cruel, hateful will, but for—she turned to her husband and wondered at what he was so intently gazing. Beyond the garden there was nothing but the hills to be seen. Alys repeated his name before he turned round with a slight start.

"And all this would have been yours, Adrian, if you had married Miss Home?" she said wistfully.

"So it seems, but, you see, I preferred to choose my own wife," said Adrian, smiling into the limpid, uplifted eyes, "just as Miss Home would naturally want to choose her own husband."

"Then you never asked her!" exclaimed Alys, arching her slender brows. Look and

tone implied that no more would have been needed.

But Adrian seemed blind to their unspoken flattery.

"No," he said briefly; "she was a mere child when my cousin first proposed it. She had never thought of such things. It seemed a wrong, an insult, to drag her into such a bargain before she knew anything of life, or even of her own mind."

"Was she so *very* young five years ago? Then I suppose she must look a good deal older now than she really is," said Alys musingly. "And you never saw her all these years till now?"

"No."

"But she was here all the time and always with your cousin," meaningly. "It does seem so funny that an old man like that should be your cousin," Alys added hastily, as if to cover her first remark, for Adrian had turned round, a sudden flash in his eyes.

"Alys, there is no use pretending to misunderstand you, but you must never hint at such a thing again. It would be base. I believe that my Cousin Lesley knew as little about Richard Skene's will as I did myself, and I believe his bequest is wholly unwelcome to her. My Cousin Richard hated my father, and he hated me because I was my father's son. It is an old story and an old grudge. I needn't trouble you with it, but from the way in which we parted I knew that I had nothing to expect. We have no right now to be disappointed, but one hopes against hope, and for your sake God knows I wish it had been otherwise."

"For my sake," said Alys, with a light, un-mirthful laugh. "I've never known anything but a pinch, and I daresay we can still pinch along somehow, but it's you I'm thinking of, Adrian. This is your rightful place, and you know it, and then what books you could have written," enthusiastically. "No need to spoil them, as you say you do, trying to please other people and not pleasing them after all. It is you who should have had all this, a woman has no need of so much," with a sweeping glance which took in moor and meadow and field and rested longingly again upon the house. "If Miss Home is as generous as you say, why doesn't she share it with you?" with a sudden sharpness like the unsheathing of a kitten's claws from the little velvet foot.

"I believe she would if she could, or if I would, which is another matter," said Adrian, "but she will expressly forbid her doing anything of the kind. But she has done, or at least offered, all that is possible. She wants me to stay and manage the place for her."

Alys's "Oh!" was rather disappointed. If this were all which the mistress of Strode could offer, it did not sound very magnificent.

"But—but you wouldn't do it for nothing?" she ventured.

"No, of course not," said Adrian, with a somewhat uncomfortable laugh. "That's the rub. I don't know the figure exactly, but old Grant had a very handsome salary for doing nothing, so I used to think, but driving about

all day in a dog-cart. I thought him a very enviable personage when I was a small chap. Tombreck, that pretty, ivy-covered house across the river, was his, but Lesley wants us to stay here at Strode."

The "Oh!" which burst from Alys's lips was of a very different quality from her last doubtful ejaculation. "To stay here!" she echoed in a tone almost of awe.

"But would you like to stay here, Alys?" asked Adrian, surprised.

"Would I like it? Oh, Adrian!" Alys drew a long breath and clasped her slim hands ecstatically. "Like to stay in a house like this! Why, the dinner-table last night was like fairy-land, like what one has read of in books! Just think of our poky rooms and the chops—chops—chops which Mrs. Joyce always sends in, no matter what I say to her, and her bills always so much bigger than you expect, and we haven't had even a day at the sea all this summer, though of course there is no sea here," with a somewhat disparaging glance at the majestic sweep of the moors. "Do you know," with a gleeful laugh, "I poked up the fire last night for pure pleasure, because I didn't need to think what the horrid coals would cost. I am afraid it was very bad of me, but I rang the bell twice, though I didn't really need anything, just to see the maid come in and cursey—so," and she drew her little face into prim lines and stood demurely at attention with folded hands.

Adrian smiled in spite of himself, and then his look clouded.

"My poor little wife, I wish I could have done more for you," he said in a restrained voice.

"I have you," said Alys, pressing nearer to him, forgetful of the long row of windows behind.

There was a pause, and then Adrian said, trying to speak lightly, "I am afraid you would find it dull here. You would miss the streets and the shops and the theatres, and the running home to see how Dad is getting on without you, and Gwen and Sylvia and Rosalind and all their friends coming in to chatter with you, and—"

"Dull!" echoed Alys. "Dull here! I should miss nothing—nothing! I am sick of Mostyn Mansions. Oh, Adrian, think what a change it will be for me, and I haven't had much in my life, have I? And think what it will be for us to have 'a handsome income'! How grand that sounds!"

"Alys," said Adrian in a troubled voice, "I didn't think you would look at it in this way. I hate to disappoint you, but—I haven't promised. Indeed, I have given my cousin to understand that I can't do it—"

"Oh, Adrian!" Alys fell back a pace and stared at him in blank dismay. Then she sprang forward. "Don't say 'No,' Adrian. Can't you tell her that you've changed your mind? If you don't care about it for yourself, though I can't see why you shouldn't, think what it would mean for me."

"It's not that I don't care for it, dear," gently, "but I'm not fit for it. Anything I

knew about estate management, and that was precious little, has been driven out of my head long ago. I can't take my cousin's money and not give her a fair return for it—surely you see that."

Alys broke into a laugh of relief.

"You not fit! That's only one of your tire-some scruples, like paying that horrid old plumber when I did so want you to hire a piano. Of course you're fit—I wonder what you're not fit for."

"Not apparently to be a successful writer yet, as the world counts success, and I don't know if I ever shall be; but you know, Alys, what my dream is," and his voice had the uncertain note of one who hopes for sympathy but is doubtful of receiving it—"that some day I shall write something not merely for bread and butter, but which people will care to remember"—a pause—"I should have to give that dream up."

"I don't see why," said Alys eagerly. "You know the noise in the Mansions drives you nearly crazy. Why shouldn't you write ever so much better here in the quietness? Well," as Adrian shook his head, "why not at least try it? If it won't work—why"—with a shrug of the thin shoulders under their gauze ruffles—"we are no worse off than we were; Mostyn Mansions won't run away."

"No, but I shouldn't be surprised to hear any day that they had collapsed like a house of cards. They are about as solid. You are a practical little woman not to encourage vain aspirations, but I don't know about being no worse off. I couldn't expect the *Up-to-Date* and *The Passing Hour* to be waiting for me with open arms, and one or two editors who are becoming dimly aware of my existence, will have wholly forgotten it in a week or two. What then?" Adrian had reverted to a half-jesting tone. Even yet he had perhaps not learned to take his wife quite seriously.

"Hateful old things! You were quite thrown away upon them," pouted Alys. "Something better would turn up." Then, with a swift change from the child-like manner, which Adrian, like many another man, was inclined to think implied child-like perceptions, she exclaimed, "Think it over again—think of *me* this time. I have never asked anything from you before, but I do ask this. You won't—you can't—refuse me."

Her little thin hands were locked tight round his arm, her eyes blazed passionate entreaty out of the small pale face. Adrian met that look for a moment and then turned away his head.

"Since you wish it so much, Alys," he said gravely, "I won't—I can't refuse if I can possibly help it. I've been able to gratify few enough of your wishes, but to give up my own work and decide to stay here is a very serious matter. It would mean a great deal to me—more than I can well explain," he added in rather a stifled voice.

He saw again the pained flush on Lesley's face, heard the note of disappointment and hurt hope in her voice, as she had said, "I thought you would have been more generous." He had

read her mind as clearly as she had read his. With that knowledge between them, could he go to her again and tell her that what he had rejected a few hours ago he was now ready to accept?

Alys noticed the suppressed agitation in his voice, but she was too dazzled by her visions of what life at Strode would surely be, too avid for any change, too eager for escape from the old cramped conditions to pay much heed to his last words. Afterwards she remembered them very well indeed, and put her own interpretation upon them. For the moment she was singly intent upon getting her own way. She stood silent for a moment, digging the point of her worn little shoe into a mossy crack between the flags.

"It sounds hateful to say it, I know," she said in a low voice and without looking up, "but—but your own work hasn't done much for us yet. We've always had bread, of course, but there's not been *very* much butter, has there? It has had to be pretty thinly scraped, and if—if you were to turn ill, if anything were to happen—if I were—alone—" The last word came in a whisper, on the rise of a sob. The eyes she lifted were wide with fright—a child's panic.

"Alys!" exclaimed Adrian, startled by her plea, more startled still that she should have made use of it, but, before he could speak, she had turned and fled away along the terrace.

Her slim, black figure, with its light, fluttering movements, was the only alien note in the old familiar picture. It vanished, and her husband, who had stood looking after her, a cloud of perplexity on his face, turned with a sigh towards the hills again—these hills of home for whose mighty solitudes and soothing, uplifting silence he had hungered so often in vain in the city wilderness.

Five years since he had looked upon their solemn, changeless outlines! Five years which had so changed himself and his world, and yet after all the experience had been no uncommon one.

When, in a hot fit of young, chivalrous wrath, he had refused to be a party to coercing Lesley's maiden will, he had little doubt that he could carve out a career for himself. Possibly he had cherished some vague dream of returning to Strode and wooing Lesley no longer to order, as he indignantly called it, and of laying laurels of his own reaping at her feet. There was time enough yet, she was still a child, he had decided at that hasty parting, when a warmer glance from her frank eyes might even yet have given him pause; but he had gone on his way and learned his lesson—a hard one. He had learned that it is one thing to plan generous schemes for the many from a safe vantage ground and another to be flung into the whirlpool to sink or to swim.

At length, by such efforts as only those who have been through the mill can know, he had gained a footing which, though precarious enough, allowed him at times to write for something beyond the day's wages. His delicate, subtle prose and verse, though little known to

the world, which likes the colour laid on thick and strong, had gained him some reputation in more critical circles, while, as men do, he had made many and diverse acquaintances up and down amid the free lances of literature and art.

At one of their easy friendly gatherings he had encountered Alys D'Alleyne, and somehow had drifted into a certain intimacy with her and her family, how he never exactly knew, since their ways were emphatically not his ways and jarred ceaselessly with his fastidious nature and habits of thought. A parcel of rackets, headstrong, half-educated lads and girls, all eager to fight their way to the stage or the platform, to publicity and notoriety at any cost, they had scrambled through life under the nominal care of a somewhat nondescript father, a dabbler in all the backwaters of the theatrical world. Amid the noisy, heedless rout of brothers and sisters, Alys, timid, fragile, and shrinking, showed to Adrian's fancy "like a lily among thorns." She seemed also the Cinderella of a household where there was never any money, nor apparently any regular meals, and yet food and drink of a kind could be had at all hours.

Now a sudden, vivid picture of Halcyon Villa arose before him, and of that shaping hour which had all unexpectedly decided his destiny. How well he remembered it—the dreary, pretentious house, with its cracked stucco and peeled paint, and the drift of straws and flying papers which some circling eddy of wind seemed always to deposit in the plot of sickly grass within its florid, broken railings! The electric bell, in brazen defiance of its invitation, refused to "press," and he had had to wait a long time till a slipshod damsel, who would doubtless have alleged that she had been "cleaning herself"—though, judging by results, the process had been a somewhat partial one—at last admitted him.

There was no one in the drawing-room, where the ashes of yesterday's fire still encumbered the grate. The chairs stood about anyhow. One was heaped with some sewing, a mass of flimsy, bright-coloured stuff, snips and cuttings of which bestrewed the carpet; under another a pair of battered little slippers with preposterous heels had been pushed. The blinds, hanging all awry, were pulled up, probably because they had refused to come down. The clear, spring sunlight was staring in over some wilted plants, which Alys sometimes remembered to water, and mercilessly revealing the threadbare shabbiness of carpet and cushions, and the undisturbed film of dust which overspread every flat surface.

Though the sight was not unfamiliar, Adrian looked round with a shrug of distaste, which changed to a whimsical smile as, amid the crowd of objects—ornaments, their owners doubtless considered them—which jostled each other on the mantelpiece, his eyes fell on a bit of Devonshire pottery in which some fading flowers were stuck. Cracked and spoutless, it bravely bore the legend, "Adventures are to the adventurous." Had the poor clay pot taken its chances amid the brazen ones, Adrian won-

dered, with a twitch of the lip, when the door opened, and, like a white, frightened mouse, Alys stole in. Clearly she had been crying, and had dabbed her face more plentifully than skilfully with powder to hide her swelled eyelids and the bluish rings which circled her eyes.

Without greeting her visitor, she paused and looked round her tragically.

"It's too bad! Gwen promised me that she would see things tidied up, but nobody ever does anything in this house," she exclaimed.

"Except you," said Adrian with a smile, and then, at sight of her face, he exclaimed, "What is the matter, my poor child?" Unconsciously his tone was warmer than he knew.

Next instant the choking sobs broke out anew, and he was trying to comfort her, as if she had been indeed the child she seemed.

"Tell me what is the matter, and perhaps I could help," he was repeating, when from under the heavy eyelids the grey eyes met his, and Adrian Skene would have been blind indeed if he had not understood.

To the girl, accustomed to the "hail-fellow" familiarity of her own set, Adrian Skene, with his innate chivalry and his touch of the "grand manner," inherited, perhaps, with his French blood, had seemed a prince-errant, a being from another world. She had taken no pains to hide her feelings, and to-day Adrian could not but see what was made so plain. He hardly heard her sobbed-out tale of an invitation meant for her, but which Rosalind, as the eldest, had appropriated.

"It was to one of Mrs. Delville's 'at homes,' and Mr. Mountford, of the 'Imperial,' was to be there, and I know I would have been asked to recite, and who knows what might have come of it, for I *can* recite," falling unconsciously into a pose at once. "I never get a chance, but I am fit for something better than to darn and to dust, and coax the tradespeople, and do all the things in the house that no other one will do. But that's always the way; they won't do it, and somebody must, and it's always me, and now Rosalind says she must have her chance first, so she's going to-night, and it's not fair—nobody thinks of me—nobody cares—" The broken words were swept away in a storm of tears.

It was all so young, so artless, so pitiful—the little oval face all blurred with tears and powder, the eyes telling their innocent story with every glance, the girl's lithe young warmth pressing so trustingly against his arm—it was little wonder that pity and kindness should for the moment swamp reason and memory. What he had said Adrian could never clearly remember, but next instant Alys was drying her tears against his shoulder.

"Do you mean it—oh, do you really mean it?—it can't be true—it's too good to be true—and to think I was so miserable a little while ago, and—and now I am—so happy," came in broken snatches between the lessening gusts of sobs. With the last words the little, tear-stained face was raised for a moment, the wet, grey eyes glorified by exultant love.

What could Adrian, impulsive and generous

as he was—what could any man do, but whisper the assurance that he did mean it, however far it might have been from his thoughts even a few minutes ago. From that casual visit to Halcyon Villa he came away an engaged man, but it required all the recollection of Alys's tearful raptures to blot out the memory of Captain D'Alleyne's paternal blessings. Though perfectly willing that anyone should relieve him of his very lightly-carried responsibilities, he had shown himself astonishingly well aware of his prospective son-in-law's connections and possible prospects, and had been most happily indifferent to Adrian's blunt statement that nothing was to be hoped for from that quarter.

No doubt, as Alys had said, it was he who had planned that little *coup* yesterday, which made the young man's face burn again as he recalled it.

"Never let yourself be left behind in a corner, my girl. Let these fine folks know at once there is a Mrs. Adrian Skene, and then you can look after your interests better than that superfine husband of yours is likely to do," Adrian could hear the big, rolling, husky voice saying.

But all that was for the time forgotten in the cleaving decision which was now forced upon him. Strong as was the call of the hills, of the old life, of the old memories, it had not sufficed that morning to silence the voice of pride, or to slacken the grip which, through years of disappointment, his life-work had laid upon heart and mind. But since then he had made a surprising discovery—he had failed to make Alys happy! Her sudden, sharp outburst of weariness and dissatisfaction, her last words—words which surely she would never have used save under the utmost pressure of desire—had awakened a searching question. Was it not his duty to yield to this passionate desire of hers, since he had done and could do so pitifully little to ease and brighten life for her?

Once more he was passing through one of Life's shaping hours, and, little though he realised it, it was Alys's little slim hands which were moulding his destiny, her eager desires which would form and colour his future.

He gazed at the far-off hills, where the pearly shadows were deepening to the violet of evening, as if to read his answer there. He, too, realised how many and how various were the "buts" arrayed against Lesley's project, but, as the shrewd lawyer had conjectured, there was one which no more occurred to him than it had done to his cousin. He never dreamed of asking himself whether he could live side by side with the new Lesley whom the years had developed and not be visited by the old dreams in which "little Lesley" had once long ago played a part.

CHAPTER VI.

"So you've got your own way," said Lady Marchmont a few days later. "I wonder what Richard, poor man, would think if he knew

what a coach-and-four you had driven through that misguided will, and that Adrian was settled at Strode again?" with a laugh. "He should have appointed other trustees if he wanted his wishes carried out."

"On the contrary, Sir Neil stood out for someone more experienced—as if Adrian didn't know every inch of Strode," said Lesley rather stiffly. "And if he doesn't, I do," she added. "But, of course, both he and Lord Polmont feel that their trusteeship is rather a matter of form. In little more than a year I shall be my own mistress."

"I wonder when you were anything else," said her ladyship drily. "But I should like to get at Adrian's view of it. I can't think he'll altogether like being man where he ought to have been master."

Lesley winced, her colour rose.

"I know—I know, but what else could I do?" she said hurriedly. "It was all I had to offer. At least, it was better than nothing, as, from what Alys said, I gathered that things were—were not going too well."

"Alys?" queried Lady Marchmont, with a disdainful sniff, as if at some disagreeable odour.

"I don't suppose she can help her name. She is not to blame for that at least," said Lesley, trying to laugh. "What else am I to call her?"

"That's as you please, but why did she come whining to you?" sharply.

"She didn't whine," said Lesley, half indignant. "I only asked her a few questions, as—kindly as I could, which I couldn't well ask Adrian—"

"And you got them very fully answered," struck in Lady Marchmont. "Well, my dear, like all young folk, you must 'gang your ain gait.' '*Si la jeunesse savait*' is all very well, but youth doesn't want to know, that's my experience, so I'll keep my advice to myself. But the little kitten Adrian has brought with him can scratch as well as purr, I fancy, though it is purring very assiduously just now."

"At least I shan't bring my scratches to you, to kiss and make well," laughed Lesley, with a touch of defiance in her voice.

"Better not—they might be too deep for that," said the old woman grimly, and with this ominous last word Lesley left her and went out into the windy morning.

The weather had changed since hill and valley had lain steeped in the sunset glory. The moors were cloaked in grey mists, whose ragged fringes trailed low over the firwoods beyond the river, swirling hoarse and high down the glen. Every blast of wind brought down a shuddering rain of leaves to the ground to swell the deepening drifts or to be driven headlong in fantastic flight.

Lesley, accustomed to be abroad in all weathers, walked briskly along, rather enjoying the struggle against the rising wind. It was a relief to fight against something fresh and open and tangible after Lady Marchmont's hints, the head-shakings of her trustees, and the doubts as to the wisdom of her course which had inevitably assailed her when her

point was once carried, and the hot fit was succeeded by the cold.

Had she done right to meddle with the lives of others, to thrust in her hand amid the wheels of fate and divert their course? Lesley had asked herself this question more than once during these last few days. After her memorable interview with Adrian upon the moor, when she had turned away from him with such a hot, hurt heart, she had not seen him again that day. He had contrived to be too late for luncheon, and Alys had claimed the afternoon.

When she came down in the evening, Lesley had found herself alone in the hall. As she waited in the fire-lit dusk for the other to appear, she was bracing herself for the inevitable ordeal of meeting Adrian at dinner, and blaming herself for not having made sufficient allowance for his position and the point of view it inevitably entailed. No man worth counting on cared to be indebted to a woman, not even when love had made them one and "mine and thine" were happily merged in "ours." How much less, then, was to be hoped for from friendship? She had been too hasty, as she so often was. She had expected Adrian at once to give up the hopes and aims of struggling years, while if she had been more patient—

"Lesley," Adrian's voice at her side had broken in upon her regrets, and she turned to him with a start, "you told me this morning," he began, "without any preamble, 'that I was ungenerous—perhaps I was. I have never thought that of you, and I can't give you a better proof of it than by asking you to forget what I said to-day, and let me serve you as you wish.'"

"Oh, Adrian, I am so glad; you have made me very happy," she exclaimed, involuntarily stretching out her hands to him, too relieved for the moment to wonder what had led to this sudden and startling change of front.

Amid the fire-chased shadows she could not clearly see his face, but as he caught and held her hands in a close clasp something struck chill through her thrill of relief and joy. It was wholly absurd, and yet somehow she felt half frightened at this unlooked-for fulfilling of her desire. She knew that she had taken Adrian's refusal as final, that when he had said, "It would not be honourable," she had never expected him to yield. How had he so swiftly reconciled her offer with his honour? But the question passed, and the curious, momentary sensation with it, as he went on in the same almost over-steady tone.

"At least you will let me *try* to serve you—that is all I ask. We shall be wise to regard it as an experiment, and if I prove a hopeless failure, then you can kick me out and try your experienced man."

"I am not afraid," she had said, the ring returning to her voice.

"Then we shall seal the bargain," said Adrian, lifting her hand to his lips in his easy, graceful fashion, and so the momentous question was settled and she had got her desire.

Now her vaguely recurring doubts, awakened

by Aunt Mary's "croaking," as she irreverently styled it, were put to momentary flight when, nearing the gates, she encountered a dragged and melancholy figure.

"What a dreadful day," pouted Alys, as Lesley came up. "Do you often have weather like this?"

"I am afraid I must confess that we do," said Lesley, "but then I am so used to it, I don't mind it, or rather I love being out of doors in all weathers, there is always something to see and to enjoy. I sometimes think that a grey sky brings out the colouring even more than a bright one. See how green that moss shines out against the dull light."

"Perhaps," said Alys, without looking round. "I suppose one might get accustomed to it in time," dubiously.

Her quick eyes were running over Lesley's short, serviceable tweed skirt, her easy coat, and her plain, close-fitting felt hat. Hideous, she mentally pronounced them, but undeniably suitable, if one must be out in such horrible weather, though where the necessity came in she could not see. Her conviction was strengthened by the knowledge that her gauze frills were limp and flabby with the damp, that her trailing skirt had slipped more than once into the mud when both hands had been required to maintain the poise of her hat against the assaults of the wind.

"I can't see why anyone should *want* to go out on such a day," she said dolefully, "but Adrian fairly dragged me out. He says I am far too much in the house, but where could one be better on a day like this?" with a shiver. "He wanted me to go to the village, or somewhere, with him. It is not so bad here," with a condescending glance at the roadway, rolled to the last pitch of smooth firmness, "but once beyond the gates—look!" tragically. She lifted a shabby-smart little French slipper, its absurd heel crusted and clogged with mud, much as a dog might hold up a hurt paw.

Lesley smiled.

"You will have to follow my example; nothing else will do for our roads here," glancing down at the natty, thick-soled boots displayed by her short skirt. "But there is no need always to walk; perhaps you prefer riding."

"Thank you, I haven't learned yet," said Alys stiffly, and indeed a hippogriff would have been as feasible a mount at Halcyon Villa as a lady's horse.

"You could soon learn. Adrian could soon teach you," urged Lesley kindly. Her hands were always full, but in the press of legal and other business during the last few days she felt that she had perhaps somewhat neglected her guest—her new housemate rather. "Have you seen the greenhouses yet? Would you care to look round them, or would you rather go back to the house?" she asked, wondering what she could do to entertain this girl, who looked so forlorn.

"Thank you, I should like to see the greenhouses," said Alys submissively, "but I am sorry to take up your time, everyone says you are so busy."

"I am not so desperately busy as all that,"



"'I should like to live here,' she exclaimed."

said Lesley with a laugh, to cover a slight sigh over the dozen things she had wanted to do this morning. However, to make acquaintance with Alys was more important, and in any case she had wanted a few minutes alone with the girl.

They turned to the long line of glass gleaming white under the low sky, and as they stepped in Alys drew in a deep breath of the warm, moist, heavily-scented air.

"I should like to live here!" she exclaimed, in the first spontaneous-sounding words which Lesley had yet heard her utter.

"I would rather have the open air and the heather," said Lesley.

Alys looked at her pityingly, and then wandered on from one mass of glowing colour to another. "And Miss Home was mistress of all this, and would rather tramp through the mud in a man's boots," she was thinking disdainfully, with a sigh over the unequal ways of life.

"Shall we sit down?" said Lesley, when they reached one or two seats grouped round a little tinkling fountain. For a moment or two there was silence, save for the whisper of the water; then Lesley said, with some difficulty, "I am glad that Adrian has decided to stay. I feared at first that it would be very difficult to persuade him."

"There was not much difficulty in that," said Alys simply, looking up from some gardenias she was listlessly arranging. "I told him I should like it, and that settled the matter."

Lesley glanced round and met the gaze of the limpid eyes, as clear to all seeming as the tiny pool of water at her feet. Then she looked hastily away. The scent of the gardenias suddenly seemed sickeningly heavy, the air intolerably hot. A word from this pale girl at her side had been enough to clinch a momentous decision, which for all her own arguments and entreaties had still hung doubtful. But of course it was quite right—surely a man's first duty was to please his wife, if he could.

"I am glad you wanted to stay here. I hope you will like it," she forced herself to say, and was surprised at the effort it cost her to make her voice sound, as she hoped, cordial. "But I hope that you won't find it dull, that it won't be too great a change from town, for, of course, we shall be very quiet this winter," she added.

Alys's face fell. What had seemed so absurd when Adrian had first suggested it, did not seem quite so impossible now. It would be hard to say what vague but brilliant visions she had been cherishing. Still, she reassured herself by thinking that Miss Home's ideas of "quietness" might differ as much from her own as their circumstances did.

"How funny; that is just what Adrian asked me, too," she said. "There is no place quite like London—is there?—but I am sure I could not be dull here," with effusion. "But I should like you to understand, dear Miss Home, that it wasn't so much of myself I was thinking when I told Adrian I wanted to stay, though

of course I did want ever so much. Though it's hard for Adrian in many ways, it means so much for him to be at Strode again—a wife soon learns her husband's thoughts, doesn't she, and life has been such a grind in town; and though he needed a change so much, he couldn't have got it but for coming here, and I think it so sweet of you to have Adrian and me here. It's more than that—when one remembers everything it's—it's *great!*" and over her clasped hands, still half full of the gardenias, she gazed earnestly at Lesley.

Lesley rose hastily. Had Lady Marchmont been right, or was it some confused, unacknowledged consciousness which had made her smart under these simple-seeming words and glances? For the present she felt no desire for further intimate talk with Mrs. Adrian Skene. There was still something to be said, however.

"I suppose there should be no secrets between husband and wife," she said, with rather a faint smile, "but you needn't tell Adrian anything about this. Travelling and leaving home cost a great deal. Mourning is always expensive, too, and of course you hadn't time to provide yourself with it." She hastily drew an envelope from an inner pocket of her coat and put it into Alys's not unwilling hands. "Oh, please, don't!" earnestly, as Alys, peering into the envelope and between the folds of the strip of pink paper, began to exclaim:

"But, Miss Home, this is a fortune!"

"Not much of a fortune," went on Lesley hastily, and flushing hotly the while. "Black things are always horridly dear!"

"But must I wear black? It makes me look so pale—I look a perfect fright," exclaimed Alys, with that sudden droop of the mouth which was so child-like and so pitiful.

Lesley was forced to smile.

"During the day at least, I am afraid it would be expected, and that is why I have ventured to do this, for no one has a store of black clothes on hand—but you might wear white in the evening," she added, her smile reflecting the sudden radiance on Alys's face.

Surely her first impression was right—Alys was only a child after all, was Lesley's conclusion, as she hurried away to escape the girl's outburst of thanks.

CHAPTER VII.

"ADRIAN, shall I do? Now look at me for once, please, not through me nor beyond me, but look at *me—me*, and tell me if I shall do."

"Do for what? My dear child, where on earth are you going?" exclaimed Adrian, gazing at her astonished.

"Adrian, you can't possibly have forgotten—to lunch at Wedderburne to meet Sir Neil's sister, Mrs. Kenyon. Why, I've been counting the hours. It's the first prospect of a little change in all the weeks I've been here. We can't go anywhere because of 'the bereavement,' as that stodgy old clergyman's wife always calls it, and I believe Lady Marchmont

would have put a spoke in our wheel to-day, but she is so keen for Miss Home to go to Wedderburne," with a quick glance at her husband. "And nobody has been here but a few high and mighty county folk, who can only see me by a great effort, and some Noah's Ark people from the town, and I don't see why I should trouble myself to entertain Shem, Ham, and Japhet and, above all, their wives."

"Why, Alys, this is a different story. I thought that if only you were at Strode—" began Adrian.

"That I should be quite happy," broke in Alys with rather a forced laugh. "But I am happy," she said eagerly, "and I am sure I should be *quite* happy if I weren't quite so much alone. You know, I've never been used to it. Must you be out all day and every day, Adrian? It is not very lively for me, sitting for hours over the fire with a book, or winding a little wool for Lady Marchmont, if she's in a good humour and chances to remember my existence."

"But what can I do, dear?" said Adrian gravely. "I have both to learn my work and to do it, and I'm bound to justify my cousin's choice of me—"

"And is Miss Home teaching you? She is always with you," broke in Alys pertly, though the eyes which she hastily averted were piteous.

"Lesley knows every stick and stone about the place and the people too. She has been the greatest help to me," said Adrian rather coldly. "But, Alys, why should you sit over the fire?" with a quick change of tone. "Why not come with us—with me? It would be a change for you."

"You know I can't ride those great prancing horses," said Alys pettishly, and restlessly shifting the objects on the dressing table.

"But there's no need to ride. I'd take the cart any day you would care to come—and it's not *always* raining."

"And would Miss Home or I sit behind?" laughed Alys. Then, at sight of her husband's face, she ran to him. "Adrian," eagerly, "I didn't mean to be horrid, I didn't, indeed. I know I shouldn't have said that, and I'm sorry I did, but you must admit it is a little dull for me."

"I thought you were never to be dull at Strode, little woman," said Adrian, in the indulgent tone he often used to her, but now it was assumed with something of an effort. "If our staying here does not make you happy—"

"But it does, it does, and perhaps I wasn't altogether to blame for not realising that it would be quite so solemn and stately and—and stupid," with a mischievous grimace, "and I am quite happy in the prospect of going to Wedderburne. But you have never told me how I look. It's a long time since I had a compliment."

She stepped back a pace or two and stood confident, smiling. She wore black, of course, but to say that is to say nothing, for black, as no other shade or colour can do, runs through the whole gamut of expression in a woman's

appearance from the dowdy to the daring, and Alys could never be described as dowdy. From the foam of frills which eddied round her feet to the sheath of glittering jet which encased her slim body, and the exaggerated pictorial hat which crowned her russet hair, she seemed to her husband the embodiment of a smartly executed French caricature.

"I—I am sure it is all right," was all he could find to say after an uncomfortable moment in which he strove vainly to think of something even remotely complimentary. "Somehow I think I liked your old way of dressing better. Of course, I don't know about such things, but isn't this just a little—what is the word?—extreme for a quiet, informal luncheon. Why not consult Lesley?" turning back towards his dressing-room.

What wife could be expected to take such a suggestion meekly.

"Consult Lesley!" Alys's shrill laugh rather startled Adrian, so reminiscent was it of Halcyon Villa and his little Cinderella's elder sisters, between whom and his wife he had ever thought so profound a gulf was fixed. "My dear Adrian, Miss Home is no doubt a paragon of all the virtues, but beyond her riding-habits, which I grant you, she knows nothing, absolutely *nothing* about clothes."

"Neither do I, but she always seems to me suitably dressed," said Adrian, thereby in no way improving matters. As Alys tossed her head in silent scorn, he went on, with a keener edge of discomfort in his voice, "I shall be able to do more soon, Alys dear, but Dalma-hoy's cheque in advance had mostly to go to clear off things in town. Then where—" A glance at her floating skirts conveyed the question.

Adrian might know little enough about clothes, but it did not need much knowledge to assure him that the cost of this fresh, crisp toilette was on a very different scale from Alys's little home-made *fichus*.

"That's a secret," laughed Alys. "If you will waste money paying dull old debts, I must spoil the Philistines on my own account. At least you won't be asked to pay, you dear old curmudgeon."

Adrian's dark flush stained his face, but all that he allowed himself to say was:

"You will come to me, Alys, the next time."

Wedderburne was a vast house built at the time of the classic revival, which has left to modern Edinburgh a baleful legacy of squat, pseudo-Doric temples, and has scattered over the country mansions whose massive, pillared fronts, suggestive of town-hall or exchange, seem oddly out of place by a green riverside or amid quiet fields. From the central hall, with its marble pavement and columns and its domed cupola, no heaping fires nor coiling hot-air pipes could banish a sense of chill on this grey but mild November day.

If a subtler sense of chill pervaded the party in the dining-room it was not the fault of Mrs. Kenyon, a lively little woman, still pretty in a dark, vivacious style. She was very good-natured and very popular, being always ready to do a kindness when she re-

membered. She in no way resembled her brother in face or stature, and as she had been married very early to a Stock Exchange magnate, and Sir Neil had for years been a traveller—part sportsman, part explorer—they had seen but little of each other. That, however, in no way prevented her from taking the keenest interest in his affairs, which to her were summed up in matrimonial possibilities.

"Neil must marry," she had decided, as soon as the death of his uncle, old Sir Hugh, had brought the wanderer rather reluctantly home. A casual mention of Miss Home in one of her brother's very infrequent letters had been enough to give wings to her fancy, as coincident with that his complaints of the dullness of Wedderburne and a stay-at-home life had suddenly ceased. Through her innumerable dear friends she had soon learned how desirable the match would be, and if this had been the case a few months ago, how much more so now, when Miss Home was left sole heiress to her uncle? With Strode added to Wedderburne, Neil might aspire to almost anything. Her family feeling, her kindness, her social ambitions were all aflame. Much against her husband's will, she lengthened their stay in the North, and delayed her visit to Wedderburne till there should be no fear of "the bereavement" preventing her meeting Miss Home.

Now when Lesley entered the formal, old-fashioned drawing-room, which no mistress's presence had brightened for so many years, Mrs. Kenyon finally pardoned her brother's culpable indifference to the charms of the various young ladies of her own selection, each of whom would have made such an admirable Lady Wedderburne. She welcomed Lesley with so much effusion that she had but little to spare for Alys, whom she carelessly pronounced "a sweet little thing, but dreadfully over-dressed."

When in a small party the host and hostess are primarily interested in one member of it, the others are apt to feel somewhat left outside. Sir Neil was not the man to wear his heart upon his sleeve, nor to be outwardly neglectful of any guest, but Alys, sitting at his right hand in virtue of her matronhood, knew that she hardly existed for him. He was courteous, of course, and asked all the necessary questions and paid all the necessary attentions, but she was perfectly aware that beyond the fact that she was a woman to whom as such he had to be civil, she left absolutely no impression upon his mental or emotional retina—a bruising conviction to even the most robust vanity.

To her other neighbour she simply did not exist at all, Mr. Kenyon's mind being wholly occupied by financial matters in consequence of the morning's somewhat disturbing telegrams from town. She had, therefore, ample leisure to observe her husband and Miss Home, who were seated opposite to her, a study to which, half consciously as yet, Alys Skene was day by day devoting more and more time. At present the most morbidly acute suspicion could find nothing to fasten upon. The pair had

hardly exchanged words, as Adrian had been monopolised by Mrs. Kenyon, who, having, like everyone else, heard the story of the will, found herself interested in the hero of it, and eager, like many another one, to find out what such a man could have seen in "that little London milliner," for with her quaint simplicity of dress Alys had sacrificed much of her air of old-world distinction.

Lesley and her host were talking with easy friendliness over some matter of estate business. Since the fates had decreed that he must take up the responsibilities of a large landowner, Sir Neil had flung himself into country affairs with an energy which had already given him a mastery of business details astonishing to his more easy-going neighbours, and which, as Adrian was already conscious, would render him a formidable critic.

And Sir Neil was perhaps not disinclined to be critical, though he would have found it hard to account even to himself for his attitude towards the younger man, or his aversion, which was much greater than he had ever expressed, to Adrian's settlement at Strode. It was utterly absurd, he admitted, since Adrian was not to blame for Richard Skene's wrong-headed will, and was indeed the chief sufferer from it, yet Sir Neil was always conscious of a certain grudge against him, as if his were the blame for the despite done to Lesley. With more reason he possibly grudged him these shared memories of early days, the boy and girl years together, which Lesley would so frequently recall. Nor was he the only one with whom these memories rankled. Alys's grey eyes would gleam steel-like at Lesley's easy, frequent "Do you remember, Adrian?"

Now when Lesley, having gaily defended the disputed point—the retention of a doubtful tenant, said:

"It was not a mere piece of feminine sentiment. Remember, I am a woman under authority. I had Mr. Skene's sanction," she was startled at the personal note in Sir Neil's response:

"I am not surprised that Mr. Skene should be on the side of sentiment."

"You speak as if sentiment were a crime," said Lesley rather hotly.

"By no means—it is merely a question of its sphere. It is only when like dirt, to use somebody's definition, it is 'matter in the wrong place,' that it becomes obnoxious. To do the best for the land and the place generally is the first consideration, the reformation of doubtful characters may come in afterwards."

"What a cold-blooded doctrine!" exclaimed Lesley, as Mrs. Kenyon's voice came from the other end of the table. She had caught but one word of her brother's remark.

"Oh, dear me, don't let Neil begin upon sanitation, Miss Home. I tell him that the first article of his creed is 'I believe in drains.'"

"One might have a worse," said Sir Neil, not unwilling, perhaps, to let the previous subject drop.

After coffee, Mrs. Kenyon suggested an ad-

jourment to the billiard-room, where some of Sir Neil's sporting trophies had lately been arranged.

"By rights they should be in the hall, I suppose," said their owner, who had shown no great alacrity in responding to his sister's suggestion. "But I should as soon think of sticking them up in a mausoleum as in that big black and white tomb downstairs."

On the common ground of sport the two men fraternised. Mr. Kenyon had retired to the smoking-room with the afternoon letters. The little cloud of mutual doubt was dispelled for the time as Sir Neil was drawn on by Adrian's questions to tell how a moose head or a pair of rare horns had been gained. He spoke simply and well, with the complete non-self-consciousness which full knowledge of a subject and absolute absorption in it gives. The talk ranged from sub-arctic nights sparkling above Labrador snows, to steaming jungles, or sandy plains spreading vast under a fiery Eastern sunrise.

"Why didn't you pull me up, Agatha, if every other body was too polite?" Sir Neil broke off with rather a shame-faced laugh, as the Strode carriage was announced.

"I was wondering what you would have done with yourself if you hadn't had to come home and look after Wedderburne. You've left yourself no more uncanny beasts to risk your neck for," said Mrs. Kenyon.

"Plenty," said Sir Neil lightly. "I must have a go at Thibet and the mountain sheep some day. I've never had a shot at one yet."

"I hope you'll be better employed in Glen Falla," said Mrs. Kenyon, with a significance which her brother wrathfully hoped the others might not notice. "Though a woman has divined a thing, why can't she let it alone!" was his inward comment.

"I am afraid I annoyed you at luncheon," he said a moment afterwards, as he was putting on Lesley's cloak for her, and Alys was bidding their hostess a very dignified farewell. "You think I am too much down on Skene," answering Lesley's questioning look, "because I was a little doubtful at first as to his having knowledge enough, but I wish you would believe," growing more earnest, "that really it was in your interest——"

"I am sure you have done a trustee's duty to the full, and I'm afraid I haven't been too grateful. Indeed," with a little mutinous smile, "I have sometimes thought that my interests could take care of themselves, as my Cousin Adrian very well can," and she put up her hand and took possession of the clasp with which Sir Neil had been fumbling.

He had been perhaps in no haste to complete the operation, for there is no position which gives such a full and uninterrupted view of a woman's face as the effort to clasp a heavy cloak for her. There was no time for more, but Lesley caught the echo of her word "grateful" as she turned quickly away towards Mrs. Kenyon.

"My congratulations," said the little lady, with dancing eyes, to her brother, as they stood for a moment under the heavy, pillared portico

and watched the carriage lamps flash lessening circles of light on the rising mists.

"Keep them till they are needed," said Sir Neil rather grimly.

"My dear Neil, where's the difficulty? The *beau cousin* is safely married, and a good thing too. You have a fair field—go in and win. It's a mistake to 'fear your fate too much.'"

"Perhaps," said Sir Neil; "but 'to win or lose it all' is an uncommon big alternative, Agatha."

CHAPTER VIII.

RAIN—rain—rain!

Alys Skene stood watching the dimming moisture form into great drops and roll slowly down the pane, her little oval face as dreary as the winter world without. But it was not the swathing mists through which the hills loomed spectral, nor the stripped garden, nor the brown, brawling river which she was seeing. It was a little picture which painted itself before her inward vision, all the more vividly for that pale background—Lesley and Adrian cantering away together, Lesley on her chestnut mare, her cheeks and eyes glowing the brighter for the soft, moist air, as she turned to call laughingly back, "You ought to have come, Alys. It's not really raining—only what we call 'saft a wee!'"

She had all the long, unbroken afternoon to brood over that picture. Lady Marchmont had a cold, and kept to her room, a holy of holies which Alys's foot rarely profaned, and she had the choice of her own sitting-room, the morning room, or the drawing-room to be miserable in! Miserable; yes, it had come to that. Her misery might be largely of her own making, but she was not likely to make that discovery. And she had laughed at the bare idea that she could be dull at Strode. Dull! if that were all, though the afternoon stretched before her like a gulf of time, to be broken only by the solemn entry of the two footmen with tea, and the return of her husband and Miss Home long after the early dusk had fallen. They would have a hundred things to discuss, in which, though they might make a show of including her, she could have no share.

It was all her own doing. She must have been mad—turning away from the window with clenched hands as she recalled how she had pled with Adrian to give up their old life for this—looking with desolate eyes round the great, luxurious, flower-filled room, empty save for her own slim, black figure.

"Well, I have lifted a stone to break my own head." Alys had heard the old homely saying on one of her rare expeditions to the village, where the people seemed to speak in an unknown tongue after the glib Cockney accent to which her ears were accustomed, but this she had understood only too well. The words repeated themselves to weariness in her mind as she wandered about, picking up a book and throwing it down, striking a note

or two on the piano, and starting as they resounded through the warm, scented stillness.

What would they be doing at home just now? To her amazement she found herself recalling with longing the scrambling teas at Halcyon Villa, where one burned one's face as well as the bread trying to make toast at the drawing-room fire, and then the rush to get dressed for the theatre for which somebody had given Dad tickets, and perhaps there would be a supper afterwards. Dust, dilapidation, selfish exactions were alike hidden for the moment by the merciful haze of memory, which threw a roseate veil even over Mostyn Mansions. If she could be happy there, how much happier she might have been here, if—*if* she were not left so much alone—and bitter brooding would find its climax in a burst of angry tears. Her plight was no uncommon one, she had got her desire, but with it leanness had entered into her soul.

Adrian Skene, whatever Alys might think, was far from indifferent to his wife's comfort and pleasure, but since he had himself no time to be dull, he had, man-like, accepted at their face-value her assurances that she could not and would not be dull at Strode. In spite of occasional doubts he was ready to conclude that, having got her wish, she would be satisfied, though experience might have taught him the direct contrary. He had all the business of a great estate to learn anew, and though he set himself to his task with dogged determination, he was acutely conscious of his inexperience and the mistakes into which at times it betrayed him.

But Alys had no interests or resources of her own, and she perversely refused to widen her outlook or to seek distraction or occupation in the pursuits of others. In her empty hours she had but too much time to brood over her grievances, and in the congenial soil of fretful, self-absorbed idleness the seeds of doubt and suspicion soon germinate and spring to a giant growth. With them there now rose up a hard anger, a determination to assert herself and somehow to make her presence felt. She would no longer sit silent as she had done at Wedderburne; she would glide about like a shadow on sufferance no longer. "The rôle of the modest violet is played out long ago—sit in a corner and you'll be left there." So her father used to say, and he was quite right.

She paused opposite one of the long mirrors, and gazed at herself from head to foot, slowly, appraisingly, as if, point by point, she was mentally comparing herself with someone. Then she suddenly flung up her head and turned away with an air of new resolve.

"I have been a fool to let myself be thrust aside so long. I'll begin anew," she exclaimed half aloud.

Next day Mr. Dalmahoy came from Edinburgh on some business which occupied him and his fellow trustees so long that they stayed for dinner. Dr. Campbell, the minister of the old cathedral kirk, and his wife had been added to the party, which was the largest that had assembled at Strode since what good Mrs.

Campbell had already irritated Alys by always referring to as "the bereavement." The party had been waiting for some time with that growing sense of injury which a delayed dinner always arouses, when Alys at last entered the drawing-room with no further apology than a careless "So sorry to have kept you waiting."

Her entrance attracted all the attention she could have desired. The effect of her white gown, with its black velvet shoulder-straps, was audacious in the extreme. Her copper-hued hair—and now Adrian recognised the change which had puzzled him for some time—no longer demurely framed her face, but was swept up to the top of her head in flamboyant waves, above which was poised a huge butterfly with outspread wings of glittering jet.

Adrian regarded her in dumb wonder, while the others accorded her a glance of astonishment before hastily pairing off together to the dining-room.

The party was not a very lively one, in spite of Alys's high-pitched chatter to Sir Neil, who did not respond over graciously, since he felt himself rather injured by being paired with Mrs. Adrian instead of Miss Home. Lord Polmont considered that the chief business of dinner was to dine, and devoted himself to the *menu*. Adrian could indulge his pre-occupation, as Mrs. Campbell, who was fond of recalling that she had known him in short frocks, required only an occasional "Yes" or "No" to keep her stream of reminiscences or kindly gossip flowing. He was tired and jarred after the long meeting of the afternoon, and now there was added the pain and perplexity with which he listened to his wife's would-be easy talk, which only succeeded in being flippant.

What had come to the child? Was this Alys, who, amid the riot of tongues at Halcyon Villa, had always seemed so retiring and gentle? He seemed to be seeing his wife to-night with other eyes—as if she were a stranger. Was it merely the effect of her new environment which might well affect an excitable nature, or was it those very surroundings, so homely and familiar to himself, which had at last forced him to see his wife in a new light, as a different background may throw the foreground out of perspective and destroy all harmony of colouring.

To Mr. Dalmahoy the memories of the last evening he had dined at Strode with his old friend were keenly present. Again he seemed to see the crimson stain spreading upon the white damask, and the tall, thin figure standing in the window and gazing out into the night.

Poor Rick, if he could but have waited. Truly the pair seemed made for each other, glancing from Lesley, talking to Dr. Campbell with serene, easy grace, to Adrian's dark, fine face at the other end of the table, for, by his cousin's wish, he took the place of host. If Richard could but have had patience, sighed Mr. Dalmahoy again, the lad need never have taken up with this "flibbertigibbet," glancing round with distaste at Alys's slim, uncovered shoulders and the towering masses of her hair. Eyes, lips, hands, arms, and those slight

shoulders were all employed in grimace and gesticulation while perforce she held Sir Neil's attention.

"She's come out of her shell with a vengeance since her first Lydia Languish appearance," he thought in secret wonder, recalling the pathetic apparition of the library. "I wonder how our friends here like it, and, above all, Master Adrian. Marriage is a queer affair, but I shouldn't have thought this little carrot-headed minx would have been his fancy."

"Ah, you are thinking so, too," said Alys's light, high voice at his side. Mr. Dalmahoy turned to find the grey eyes fixed on him with an expression which he could not read. Sir Neil had wrenched himself free, and had plunged bodily into Lesley's talk with Dr. Campbell.

"Thinking what?" the lawyer asked blankly.

"It was in this room Mr. Skene died—you were with him," she glanced with a slight shiver round the glossy, glowing walls. "If he could see us all here to-night, don't you think it might seem to him that his wish had been fulfilled?" With an odd laugh, she in her turn looked from Adrian to Lesley. "He must have set his heart very much on it to have been so keen about it. I sometimes wonder how Adrian had the courage to stand out against him. Perhaps he wouldn't do so now," she added musingly, again voicing Mr. Dalmahoy's thoughts, while he sat silent, too surprised to speak.

He looked at the "flibbertigibbet" now with a gentler eye. The limpid eyes were wistful, but the pale face under that preposterous, poisoning butterfly was hard and strained. Under her pert manner and her absurd dress his keen perceptions divined a spirit in straits, but the situation was developing too fast, and from the side from which danger was most to be dreaded. If Lesley, in her impulsive generosity, had forged a dart for her own bosom, she would carry her wound with a high head and a still face, and so would Adrian. They were Skenes, both of them, but who knew what this undisciplined young creature might do?

"My dear young lady," he said, "what we've got to concern ourselves with in this world is—what *is*; I don't believe much in might-have-beens. That at the time so-and-so didn't happen is usually pretty plain proof that it couldn't have happened, whatever we may fancy afterwards, and I wonder"—smiling—"who has better reason than yourself to know why Adrian's courage did hold out. As for my poor old friend, he had a sad life of it, and the idea had become to him like a sick man's fancy. At the last there was neither rhyme nor reason in it."

"But you said that at the last he seemed to be thinking more kindly of Adrian, and not for the first time—so at least I have been told," said Alys, passing from the personal note, which relieved though it did not altogether reassure her hearer.

"I did say so, and I believe it's true, if it's any pleasure to Adrian to know that the grudge wasn't carried to the grave; but it's ill for a man like Richard Skene to go back on his

word. If he had had more time, who knows—but"—shaking his head—"here again it's a case of 'what is.'"

"You don't suppose that he might have perhaps noted down his wishes—written something—but, since he was such a proud man, not have cared to tell anyone?" suggested Alys.

Mr. Dalmahoy laughed indulgently.

"No, no; these are the things that happen in storybooks, though there was nothing to hinder him doing it, for in Scots law if a man writes his will in his own hand and signs it, he doesn't need witnesses, but 'every man his own lawyer' is as dangerous as 'every man his own doctor,' and more so, maybe, for the mischief spreads further. If there had been anything of the kind, we should have found it long before now, and no one would be more pleased than I, unless Miss Lesley," looking down the long, shining table to his young hostess.

Alys's eyes followed his, and her mouth set hard again, but at that moment Lesley rose. As Alys rose to follow her, she hurriedly whispered to Mr. Dalmahoy.

"I know you think I shouldn't have been asking all these questions, but, do believe me, it is Adrian I am thinking of. He is wasted here—I see it now."

She was the pleading *ingénue* again, but there was the unmistakable ring of truth and passion in the last stifled words about Adrian.

In the drawing-room Alys deliberately withdrew to a distant chair, but Mrs. Campbell, to whose motherly eye the girl looked somewhat forlorn and lonely, followed her, and, thinking it the best entertainment she could offer a young wife, began regaling her with tales of Adrian and his early days.

"He was left so much alone as a child, poor dear, that we were quite glad when poor Mrs. Home died, and little Lesley was brought here," rambled on the good soul, and then caught herself up in sudden distress. "Of course, I don't mean that we were glad that dear Mrs. Home died, for it was so very sad, and she so young, poor thing. The ways of Providence are very mysterious, but since it had to be, it was very nice for Adrian, poor boy, to have Lesley here."

"Oh, yes, I quite understand. I don't know much about Providence, except that it always seems to need an apologist," broke in Alys impatiently. "I have no doubt it must have been very nice for Adrian. I suppose he and his cousin were always together. Do tell me more; a man is never inclined to talk about such things," she added coaxingly, while Mrs. Campbell sat in flustered silence, not quite certain whether she should be shocked or not by Mrs. Adrian's daring allusion, and inclining again to her first conclusion that with such a dress and a head like a haystack the girl must be rather "a trial" to her friends at Strode.

But the invitation "to tell more" was one which she never could resist, and since Mrs. Adrian came from London, that vague and mysterious Babylon, these might be the

fashions there, so she took up her artless tale with zest again, and ambled on amiably and unconsciously. Alys leaned back with averted face as the good-hearted gossip brought her tale of a boy-and-girl friendship down to its last phase.

"I don't wonder that poor Mr. Skene was so keen on the wedding, it seemed such an ideal arrangement. Adrian is a good few years older than dear Lesley, and I daresay she seemed too young at the time, but we always hoped it would come about sooner or later. Lesley needn't have been Miss Home for these five years unless she had chosen, and there's Sir Neil, it's plain enough what he wants, so one couldn't help drawing one's own conclusions; but of course, my dear," in sudden confused recollection, "that was before we knew anything about you. We couldn't be expected to know"—smiling—"but when we did hear —"

"You thought that the ways of Providence were very mysterious," Alys cut sharply through the would-be explanation, and sprang out of her chair with a sudden swiftness which set the long antennæ and the spreading wings of her butterfly a-quivering.

CHAPTER IX.

"ADRIAN," said Lesley one morning at breakfast a week or two later, "Mrs. Burnett was arranging some things in Uncle Richard's room, and I was with her, and made rather an odd find. There is a lot of letters in one or two drawers in that big old bureau in the turret room. I never knew that Uncle Richard kept any papers there. I suppose Mr. Dalmahoy must have looked over them and decided that they were of no importance, but I wish you would go over them with me, for if they are only letters, as they seem to be, they ought perhaps to be destroyed."

"Of course I shall," said Adrian. "When should you like to do it—to-day?"

"No, there is no special hurry, and I suppose you have your plans made for to-day. But here are the keys, if you will keep them meantime," laying a little bunch on the table. "It would be a shame to waste a morning like this. If you are going to Craigs, why not drive, and Alys could go with you."

She turned with a smile to Alys, who was reading a letter with an air of extreme detachment and aloofness.

"I don't know Adrian's plans, but I don't care to go out to-day, it is too cold," said Alys indifferently.

If her husband had to be prompted to remember her pleasure, then she would go without.

"Cold?" echoed Lesley. "Oh, surely not, if you had plenty of wraps—it is so bright," glancing out.

The long range of windows showed a transformed world. The first snow had fallen, and against a pale blue sky, infinitely pure and rare, the high moors spread their sheen of virgin white, every fold and slope and corrie where a shadow lay, was traced in violet or

deepest indigo. In the valley there was but a thin sprinkling of snow, enough to strike the sombre pine-trees to a brighter green, and to enhance the countless tender tints of a winter woodland in the glancing morning sun.

"I wish you would come, Alys," urged Adrian. "The air is like wine. It would do you all the good in the world."

"I wish you good people would remember that tastes differ," said Alys pettishly. "I don't like my wine iced. Besides, if I don't go, you needn't bother with the cart. Since it is such a fine day, why not ride?" with a quick flashing look from Lesley to Adrian, her eyes keen to catch any fleeting change of expression.

"The roads are too hard," said Adrian quietly, slipping the keys into his pocket and beginning to gather up his letters.

Lesley took no notice of the suggestion, as though it in no way included her. Those rambling rides had come to an end since she had remarked upon them one evening, Alys had been quick to notice, but she was none the happier for that. Jealousy, like those plants the roots of which draw their nourishment from the air, can feed fat upon the veriest nothings.

Left alone, Alys sat for a time gazing out upon the sparkling snowy world. Her face was set in hard and bitter lines. It would have been delightful to have Adrian all to herself for an hour or two, to be whirled along close by his side through the clear, diamond-bright winter morning, but it was not only foolish pique which had made her condemn herself to another solitary forenoon. A sudden wild idea had clutched her when Lesley spoke of these newly-found papers and laid the keys on the table. Her fingers had itched to snatch up the little shining bunch. It was just possible that Mr. Dalmahoy had not known of them. What if there might be something among them—some codicil to that hateful will; she had heard of such things, and Adrian was so absurdly quixotic that if his cousin's interests were at stake, he might be capable of any foolishness. Oh, if only she had those keys!

Suddenly she rose, dropped the knife with which she had been absently tracing patterns on the cloth, and, to the relief of the footman in the background silently waiting her pleasure, she hurried from the room. She darted up to the state bedroom which had once seemed so oppressively vast and splendid to her, and passed on to Adrian's dressing-room. She paused, almost startled by finding that one part of her expectations was fulfilled: Adrian had changed his coat before going out, and the one he had been wearing at breakfast was thrown down upon a chair. She slid her hand into the pocket—yes, drawing a quick breath—the keys were there!

As her hand closed upon them a flush dyed her face. The keys were there simply because Adrian thought them quite safe, because he would never dream that anyone, that she least of all, would do what he would deem so mean a thing. For a moment Alys paused, her

hand still in the depth of the pocket; then she withdrew it with a jerk. After all, with a stubborn setting of the mouth, it was for Adrian's sake, and she was doing no wrong. Where could be the harm of turning over a few old papers? Who would be the worse, and—most powerful plea of all—who would know? Lady Marchmont never appeared till lunch. Miss Home was out. Adrian would not likely return for hours. She must risk encountering any of the servants on her way to Mr. Skene's rooms, which she knew were in the old part of the house.

Presently, with a beating heart, Alys found herself in the narrow passage outside the heavy door. Cautiously she tried the door, with a sudden fear of finding it locked, but the handle turned, the door opened, and she stepped swiftly in, closing it silently behind her. For a breath's length she dare not lift her eyes, while the cold air of the unsunned, unused room struck through her like the very chill of death. Too self-absorbed to be very imaginative, she yet felt, as the door closed behind her, as if she were violating a sanctuary. By instinct she knew that nothing had been changed, that all was still as the dead man had left it. Left it? To her it seemed that his presence still pervaded the gloomy room, and that at any moment her quick, scared glances might meet the gaze of those steely eyes which looked out so coldly from the portrait downstairs.

At last she took hold of her vanishing courage. She must not be caught prying here. Slipping the key from the outside to the inside of the door, she turned it hastily, and looked round her for the "big old bureau." The light was dim, for the blinds were closely drawn over the narrow windows, set deep in the thick walls. At first she could only discern the outlines of the big, canopied, heavily-draped bed and of the solid, old-fashioned, rose-wood furniture, so dark as to seem black in the grey light. There were no ornaments and hardly a superfluous article, and the only picture was a slight, faded, crayon sketch of a fair, girlish face.

But Alys had no eyes for such details. Keys in hand, she passed from the bedroom to the dressing-room, and thence into a quaint little circular room formed by a flanking tourelle. It contained only a chair or two and a tall bureau. With a sigh of relief she thrust in a key at random. Here she seemed more free from that indefinable oppression which had haunted her since, with quivering hand, she had locked the door between herself and the living world.

Luck favoured her, the key turned, the drawer opened, and showed a quantity of dusty, yellowing papers, and yet before she plunged her hands among them she cast a terrified glance over her shoulder at the half-open door behind her. Then, with a would-be laugh at her folly, she turned the papers over with swift, deft hands. Some were neatly tied up in bundles and duly docketed with the precise neatness characteristic of Richard Skene, others were huddled in

as if the dead man had wearied of the task and left it for another day.

In a more ordinary mood Alys might have been tempted to investigate more closely, or to read some of the fading lines, but in her panic haste she had no time for that, and little thought for the tragedy of life and death which lies folded up in old letters. If what she sought was here at all it would be something fresher, more recent than these musty memorials; but in this drawer there was nothing of the kind, and with a sigh she closed it and tried another. Empty save for a few trifles, and in her disappointment she shut it with a snap, which, to her ears, reverberated through the dead stillness like a thunder-clap. It must rouse the house, she thought, starting to her feet for instant flight, but, though the heavy air seemed to vibrate with the dying echoes, no sound from without broke the silence, and, setting her teeth, she sat down again and opened another drawer.

Here there was a mere confusion of papers without any attempt at order. Alys tumbled them somewhat carelessly over. A chill fear was growing that Mr. Dalmahoy was right. Most likely those old letters had been thrust into these unused drawers and forgotten. Her sifting was growing with each moment more languid, when suddenly her breath caught. Deep down, pushed in as if at hazard, was a crumpled but fresh sheet of paper. She snatched it up, darted to the little window, thrust the shrouding curtain slightly aside, spread the paper on the low window-seat, and read:

"I, Richard Skene, being in full possession of all my powers of mind and body, though I have received a warning that my time in the latter may be brief, do now revoke all bequests in my last will to my niece, Lesley Home, and I now bequeath the mansion-house of Strode, and all the heritable property known as the Strode estates to Adrian Skene, Mary Erskine's son, and after the minor bequests in my former will are duly paid, I desire that the entire residue of my estate be divided, and I bequeath the one half to the aforesaid Adrian Skene and the other half to my niece, the aforesaid Lesley Home, and this I declare to be written with my own hand, on this, the 30th day of August, 1902."

Alys's breath came in deep, sobbing gasps as she read these scant, bald words which changed her world. She sprang from her crouching position, brain and heart aflame. Adrian would be rich, he would be free—free to use his powers as he would—he would no longer be at any woman's beck and call—and for herself! The surging swell of triumph filled her veins till she clasped her hands to her temples, feeling as if they would burst. She, too, would be free. Her husband would be her own again, she could bow Miss Home to the door. A vindictive smile curved her lips. Strode would be her own, she could live her own life there, it would be good-bye to dullness then!

She caught up the paper again exultantly, and her heart stopped.

There was no signature!

The dim light turned to blackness about her. With a faint cry she dropped where she stood and lay prone, the soaring pinnacles of her glittering aerial palace crashing to ruin about her.

A long yellow sunray pierced through the chink of the curtains and roused her at last from her forlorn abandonment. With vacant eyes she looked round the dim, bare, little room, at the old bureau and the open drawer. She felt dazed and shaken, as if, along with her dream-castle, she had fallen from giddy heights; then her dull gaze fell on the paper still clutched in her hand, and she flung it from her with a fierce, stifled cry. Nothing was changed, her last wild hope was gone. There was neither wealth nor power for Adrian, and she—oh, God pity her!—she must stand by and see the man she loved drift farther and farther away from her. He had never loved her, she saw it now, though she had laid her heart under his feet, and had made no secret of it. It was his Cousin Lesley whom he had always loved. He might not realise it yet, but some day, and that soon, he must awaken, and then— He would never break faith with his wife, of that she had no fear, he would always be kind and gentle to her, but what of that when she knew that in his heart it had always been Lesley—Lesley!

With her head on her knees, she sat still, a faint moaning like that of some tiny hurt creature escaping from her parted lips, when a sudden alarm seized her, and daily life thrust itself in again. How long had she been here? It seemed a lifetime since she had stolen in and opened that drawer.

She hastily looked at her watch—Lesley's gift—and stared in wonder. It was little more than noon, still she had been over long on this forbidden ground. Truly the dead had been well avenged for her intrusion.

As she languidly lifted the paper to put it back into the drawer she looked at it again, at the blank space, still wanting the signature.

And only a name, only two words were needed to give back to Adrian his rights, and to her her sole hope of winning back her husband's heart. Suddenly she stood rigid, her eyes fixed on the words "I, Richard Skene—" She remembered what Mr. Dalmahoy had said, that for a will like this no witnesses were needed.

Supposing—only supposing—slowly the words formed themselves, as if someone were uttering them in her ear—supposing someone were to copy these two words, "Richard Skene," it would not be difficult, and who would suffer? It would fulfil the dead man's last wish. The date was but a day or two before his death. His heart had relented, but pride may have held him back from setting down his name, and yet he had kept the paper and may have meant to complete it, any day, any hour, had not the final stroke fallen. It would right a cruel injustice, while it would leave Lesley still a wealthy woman, and as for herself—she clasped her hands hard and close over her leaping heart.

Then, with a shudder, she thrust the paper back into the drawer, and flung herself on her knees by the great chair.

"Oh, God—oh, God—oh, God!" she gasped, writhing in the full grip of desperate desire, helpless before this blast of fierce temptation. It would be so easy—so easy.

To whom or to what she cried the poor distracted soul hardly knew—to some Force without herself and stronger than herself which might make it less hard to do the bitter right. Within there was no help for her. What rule of life had she ever known, save to seize if she could any scanty good within her reach? Now she was fronted by possibilities fairer to her than any faint, half-forgotten vision of a far-off heaven. Heaven—that meant for her Adrian's love.

For a moment the balance wavered. She strove to turn away her eyes, but prayer, alas, is no magic spell to divert in a moment the current of passion, of jealousy, of craving, unchecked desire. With the wild appeal still upon her lips there flashed before her a vision of Lesley and Adrian as they had stood by the hall fire last night. The girl's face was in shadow, but in the man's eyes, as he leaned forward in earnest talk, a light had kindled which the watcher knew had never burned for her.

Suddenly Alys's sobs ceased. She sprang to her feet, her face white, her mouth tense.

"They say God helps those who help themselves," she uttered, with a reckless, half-delirious laugh.

Step by step, as if impelled onward, she moved towards the bureau, took the paper from the drawer, locked it with a steady hand, and left the dead man's room to silence and emptiness again.

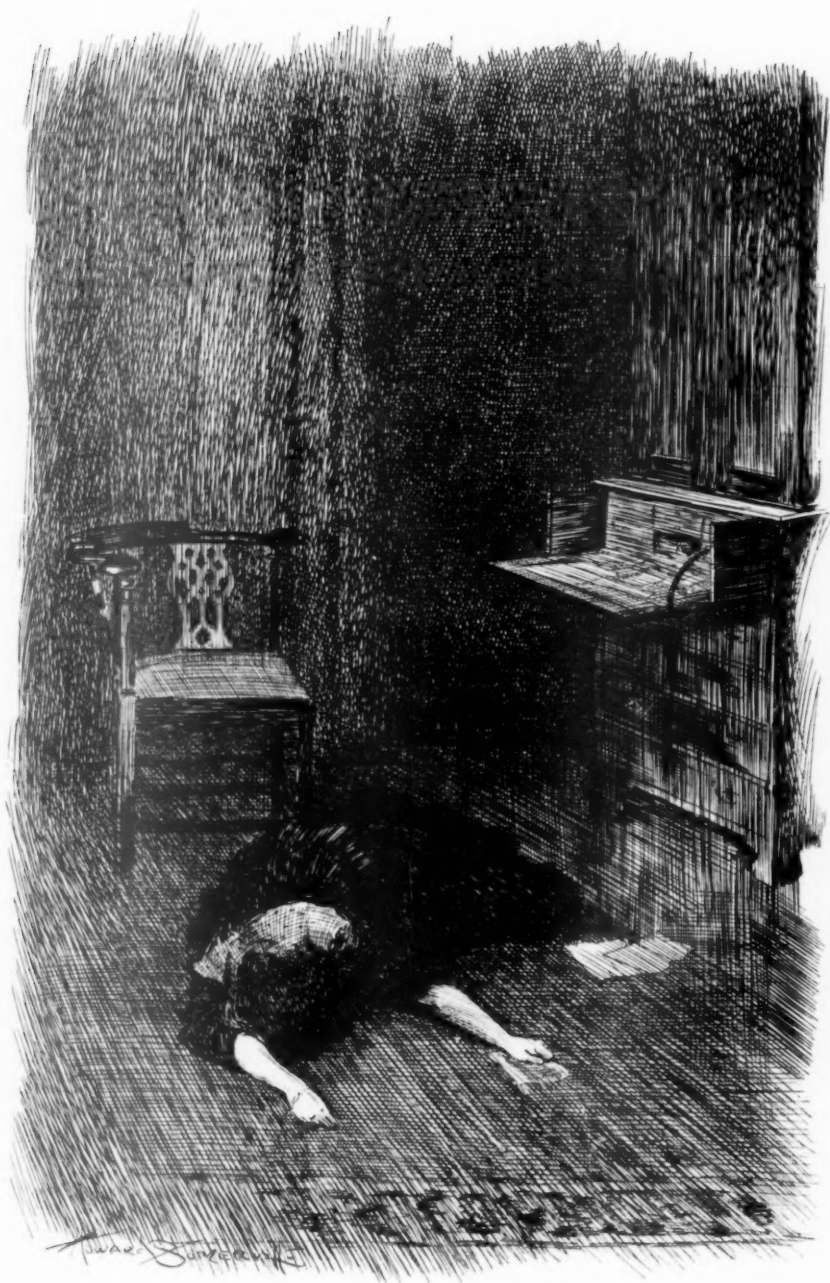
CHAPTER X.

"Poor Uncle Richard, I think few men ever got so little good out of life and all its gifts as he did," said Lesley softly.

The curtains were drawn back from the narrow window of the turret-room, and the winter sunlight entered freely. Lesley was sitting at the bureau, passing the letters to Adrian, who, after a brief glance, added them to the smouldering heap in the high, old-fashioned grate, already half choked with charred papers. Hardly a word had been spoken since they had begun their task. Unlike Alys, each was penetrated by the pathos of this poor jetsam of the hope and love and ambition, of the plans and schemes of a heart and head and hand now in a little dust quiescent.

But as the silence grew and lengthened Lesley's regret grew with it that she had asked the fulfilment of Adrian's promise, given a day or two ago, to help her in this dreary task. She ought to have remembered that it was not only to the dead man's hopes that they were giving fiery burial.

And Adrian's face looked set and stern enough as, one by one, he took from Lesley's hands the memorials of the man who had hated



"With a faint cry she dropped where she stood and lay prone."

him, and who yet, in the bitter irony of life, would have forced into his hands all that would have made life worth living. What was passing behind that still mask of settled gravity Lesley could not know, and if man could have her from the knowledge, she must never know. When the consciousness of his love had first dawned upon him Adrian could not tell, but, like an Eastern dawn, that first faint trembling streak seemed in a moment to have leaped to the glare of full-orbed, all-revealing day.

Now as he looked upon the girl, intent upon her task, the low winter sun lighting her clear, strong profile, he saw with the merciless clearness of eyes opened too late that his impulse of protective pity for Alys had been but a bubble on the surface of the deep, strong current of his early love, which, like some underground stream, had at last suddenly burst through into the daylight. The bitter waters had overflowed his own soul, how much longer could he keep them pent up within?

Lesley's hand touched his as she passed him another sheaf of papers, and the thrill which searched through every nerve and fibre was answer enough to the question. There was no blinking of his duty any longer. He must go, and go at once, lest at some chance moment, when honour and vigilance slept, those dark waters might break forth, spreading ruin and desolation all around.

"Lesley," he said abruptly, before difficult resolve had time to slacken, "we may not have such a quiet moment again, so I had better speak now. You have been all that is good and generous, but I think you won't be surprised if I say that I think our experiment has lasted long enough."

Lesley faced round, the look of tender gravity swept from her face.

"What do you mean, Adrian?" she exclaimed, a sudden startled appeal in her eyes.

"I mean that I am a cumberer of the ground here. I see it quite as plainly as Sir Neil does."

"Sir Neil! And what has Sir Neil Wedderburne to do with the matter?" with a sudden haughty lifting of her head, a sudden chill in her voice.

"Nothing whatever, if I were not unfortunately compelled to agree with him. He is quite right, Lesley. I must admit it, I am not the man for the place, I've neither the knowledge nor the experience nor, I'm afraid, the right kind of qualities for it. I can't go on serving you on false pretences. I felt it almost from the first, but I can't keep it from you longer."

Lesley had pulled out another drawer, and her hands moved aimlessly amid the disorder of loose papers which it contained.

"I know, of course, that for you to stay here is cramping your best gifts, but I hoped that for a time at least you might care to be here—it was all that seemed possible—if there had been any other way—" She stopped abruptly.

"My best gifts!" said Adrian, with rather a rueful laugh. "They haven't done much for

me yet, but it's plain enough that I haven't the gifts which are needed here, and in justice to you and to the place—well, there's only one thing to be done," he added almost harshly.

"If you feel that you must go, I can't urge you further," said Lesley in the same strained, difficult voice. Something vague yet compelling held her back from the eager persuasion she had used upon the sun-steeped moor. "But—but what of Alys?"

The papers rustled under her hands like dry, wind-sifted leaves.

"Yes, poor child," said Adrian, with a change of voice. "It is hard upon her."

Lesley's hands, groping among the papers, clenched hard as she said, with an effort:

"She at least might care to stay till—till you have arranged something. At first I feared that she found it dull here, but lately she has seemed more—more cheerful."

Involuntarily Adrian smiled rather bitterly at the word. It was hardly descriptive of Alys's bursts of loud, flippant gaiety or freakish caprice.

Poor little Alys, she had been spreading her wings, wings whose existence he had never suspected under their quiet, chrysalis sheath. How, indeed, would she bear the return from the butterfly to the grub state?

"But we are talking as if the matter were all settled, and I won't admit that," said Lesley. "Adrian, must you really go?"

She looked up. Their eyes met, and there was a long silence in the little room save for the thin crinkling sound of the papers charring in the grate.

"I must go," said Adrian, and the stillness closed again over the three hardly-uttered words.

Lesley began putting the loose papers together with feverish haste, as if by their rustle she would fain break that many-tongued silence, when suddenly the busy hands stopped dead. A faint gasp broke from her, and she sat staring, rigid.

"Lesley, what is it?" exclaimed Adrian, springing forward.

For answer she thrust a sheet of paper into his hands.

"Tell me quick—is it all right—does it mean what it says? It is my uncle's writing, I know, but is it valid—is it enough? Oh, you know what I mean."

Adrian's startled glance caught a word here and there, "I now bequeath the mansion-house of Strode—Adrian Skene—Mary Erskine's son."

"Where was this—how did you find it?" he asked in a thick, changed voice.

"Pushed away among these loose papers. We must send it to Mr. Dalmahoy at once. He was right. Uncle Richard changed his mind after all. If only he had avowed it, but it is not too late! Oh, Adrian, thank God—thank God!" with a deep breath as of unutterable relief. "I feel like the pilgrim when the burden rolled away from off his back."

She tried to laugh, but her voice broke. Two great tears welled up in the brown eyes and brimmed over as Adrian took her out-

stretched hands into his and kissed them passionately. Then he tightened the rein upon himself again.

"We do not know if you are quit of your burden yet," he said, with a smile which brought back the youth to his eyes. "There are no witnesses to this, you see," turning to the document again. "I am not lawyer enough to know whether it is valid without these; but, Lesley," and his voice deepened, "do you think I would willingly rob you of your inheritance for so slight a thing as this? I know what Strode is to you—"

"No more than it is to you," broke in Lesley. "Long ago, whenever that psalm was sung in church about those who took pleasure in the stones of Jerusalem—" Her very dust to them is dear—"I always thought of you and Strode," with an unsteady laugh.

Adrian tried to echo it.

"It has been good to see the old place again," he said with an effort; "but, Lesley, I cannot build much upon this. If my cousin Richard had really changed his mind, would he have left nothing but this fragment, and left even that to mere chance? Was that like him? He was always so deliberate in his purposes. These papers might have lain undisturbed for years or have been all burned together. Since it chiefly concerns me, I think I have a right to say that the latter would still be the wiser plan. I'm afraid you must submit to being mistress of Strode."

He lifted the paper and quietly dropped it on the blackening heap in the grate; but, in a flash, Lesley struck his hand aside and snatched up the paper before the slow-curling blue flames could lick its edges.

"Are you mad, Adrian?" she exclaimed. "You have no right to think of yourself alone. I shall submit to be mistress of Strode only till Mr. Dalmahoy gives his opinion on this will. I don't agree with you, I don't think it was strange that Uncle Richard should leave it here in this chance fashion. It was always hard for him to admit any change of opinion, even in small things. Since it was I who found this, I shall send it to Mr. Dalmahoy, and I pray God his answer will relieve me of my burden. Don't think I am speaking lightly." She looked at Adrian with sudden piercing directness. "Do you think I can take any joy in what is mine only through malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness? I say it though it is the dead I am accusing. Strode is mine now not from my uncle's love for me, but only from his hate—his dislike to you. Would you wish to owe your prosperity to a bitter grudge and to that only? Can I take any pride or pleasure in mine?"

Her rare tears had been dried by that sudden flash of indignation, but her eyes had still that tremulous brightness which speaks of tears not far away. Adrian's glance fell before her look.

"You are right—forgive me!" was all that he dared to say, lest he might say too much.

"This is a case in which the half is distinctly better than the whole," said Lesley, trying to speak more lightly.

Then the primeval emotion which for a moment had been overlaid by the excitement of this amazing discovery surged up again.

"Adrian," she cried, "there will be no need for you to leave Strode now!"

Vain words and vain rejoicing. If not Adrian, then it was she who must leave Strode. For good or for ill, their paths lay for ever apart. Face to face within the narrow limits of the Round Room, an impassable gulf lay between them, and woe be to the one who would seek to narrow it by one hair's-breadth.

Words are not always needed for mind to communicate with mind, nor heart with heart. The very air seemed charged to oppression with passion and despair, and with unflinching resolve. Lesley trembled before this strange new consciousness.

"I shall go and write at once," she exclaimed, snatching at the first pretext, and hurriedly quitting the room.

CHAPTER XI.

"WHO is this Mr. Ferrier, and what can he want with me?" exclaimed Alys pettishly.

"He is Dalmahoy's partner, and has come instead of him, as poor old Dalmahoy is seriously ill. I am sorry for it. I wish he could have been with us to-day, and so I am sure will he," said Adrian.

"But what can this Mr. Ferrier want with me?" reiterated Alys.

"I don't know, unless perhaps he wants to make more of a ceremony of the affair, but since he has asked for you, I must tell you something. I thought it better not to tell you until it was a certainty one way or other."

"Oh, don't trouble to explain. I am quite accustomed to being left out," said Alys with bitter lightness. "Don't I sit by day after day while you and Miss Home discuss things I know nothing about."

"Because they in no way concern you," said Adrian, with a touch of impatience veiling some deeper feeling; "but this does—closely—and it was to save you from very cruel suspense that I thought it kinder to keep it from you for a time, but now you had better be prepared for what Mr. Ferrier may have to say. A very wonderful thing has happened, Alys," his voice changing. "When Lesley and I were looking over some of my cousin's papers, she found among them what appeared to be a will in his own handwriting. I thought at the time it might be invalid because it had not been witnessed, but I have learned since that that is not so. It is in wills of this kind. Alys—" He paused a second—it was difficult to go on.

"Well?" was all she said, instead of the outburst of excited questions he had expected.

She did not even turn round, but stood still in the window recess, a slim, dark silhouette against the frosty panes. They were in their own sitting-room, and while they talked Alys had been half-absently plucking off a few faded leaves from a tall plant of white chrysanthemum which stood in the window. In the brief pause the plucking hand was still busy,

but Adrian was too absorbed to notice that now it was stripping off fresh as well as faded leaves.

"Alys, if this will be valid," Adrian went on, "it will give you all you could desire."

"It must be a wonderful will to do that," broke in Alys bitterly.

All she could desire! So she had once thought, but—oh, the mockery of it! No power on earth, or in heaven, if there were a heaven, could do that for her now.

"It would make you mistress of Strode—how would you like that, little wife?" said Adrian, but even in uttering the words the thought smote him how he had last used them.

He could think of no one but Lesley as mistress of the old house, moving with her frank, gracious ease about the great rooms, sitting at the head of the table in the ruby glow of the dining-room. A hundred old familiar pictures rose before him, when Alys's continued silence plucked him away in quick shame and remorse from these wayward fancies. He made a hasty step to her side, and, putting his arm round her, gently turned her towards him.

"Alys, my poor child," he exclaimed in shocked surprise, "this has been too much for you. I wish I could have kept it from you till I knew the truth."

The small oval of her face might have been carved in old ivory, so lifeless and rigid it looked, all save the imploring eyes.

"You were right not to tell me sooner," she whispered. "It's the suspense that is so dreadful. Don't ask me to go to the library and wait and listen while Mr. Ferrier wraps up the truth, whatever it may be, in words which no one can understand. I couldn't bear it."

"Of course, I can tell Ferrier to excuse you," said Adrian. In his pity for her distress it did not occur to him how eagerly she had thrust herself upon such an ordeal before. "I hate to urge you, but he has made rather a point of it, I don't know why, so if you could face it, it might be as well," regretfully. "Lesley will be there, of course, and she has far more at stake than we have. The suspense will be all the greater for her. If the will is waste-paper, then we are no worse off than we are, except that I must leave Strode, though in any case I had meant to do so—"

The words had slipped from him before he had realised that they were spoken, but before he could say more, Alys burst out:

"You meant to leave Strode! Oh, Adrian, why do you keep things from me? Oh, if I had known—if I had known!"

"Alys, my dear wife, what do I keep from you?" said Adrian gravely, though with a stinging consciousness that there was one bitter truth he must keep from her till his last breath if he could. He could not understand this sudden emotion, but Alys had surprised him in many ways of late. "Our staying here was only an experiment. I don't think it has answered very well, and I don't know if you, any more than I, have been very happy here. I had just come to this decision when this affair of the will turned up, and everything

must hang upon that. But if it turns out to be only another pretty bubble broken, would it make you very miserable to go back to Mortyn Mansions? At least we could live our own lives there; surely that would be something, dear."

Adrian did not know that every word was a barb planted in his wife's heart. Alys clung to him in an anguish which he could not divine. Within the past few days she had been learning what a great gulf is fixed between the hither and the further side of a mortal temptation. One step, and there is no going back for evermore. Now it seemed to her that all which she had madly coveted, the wealth and ease, the pomp and place, ay, and the revenge on the woman who had supplanted her, were but as the small dust of the balance. To have Adrian to herself again, to have the hope of regaining his love, that had finally weighted the scale, and now—now she might have had that without—without—

A tap at the door was followed by Soames' colourless, respectful voice:

"Beg pardon, sir, but Mr. Ferrier desired me to say that, if perfectly convenient for you, he is waiting in the library."

Alys moved towards the door like a sleep-walker, but Adrian closed it upon Soames and caught her hand.

"My dear Alys, don't go as if you were being led to execution," trying to laugh, though his own pulses were not too steady. "Ferrier can't drag you anywhere against your will, and most certainly I won't. I fancy he merely thought you would like to hear for yourself, but you had far better stay quietly here," drawing a chair nearer for her, "and I promise I shall bring you the news at once, whatever it may be."

He tried to draw Alys into the chair, but she suddenly shook off his hand.

"No, it would be worse waiting here alone," she said; "I shall go and hear for myself."

CHAPTER XII.

As, with a hasty word of apology, Adrian entered the library with his wife, he was conscious that his heart was beating with heavy, sickening thuds. For once life seemed to have turned its pages backwards, and, save for a slight change in the actors, the former scene in this room seemed about to be repeated. Involuntarily he glanced at the door, half expecting to see that startling apparition of Alys's slim, black figure, but to-day she was sunk in the depths of one of the big leather chairs by his side.

Mr. Dalmahoy's place was filled by a tall, thin man, as neutral-tinted as one of his own calf-bound law books. His sharp face lacked the genial humanity which tempered the keenness of his partner's, nor had he the same close links of old friendship for his clients at Strode. Now, as then, Lord Polmont, with his eyeglass—none could think of the one without the other—and Sir Neil Wedderburne were present. With Lady Marchmont and Lesley, they

were already seated on the further side of the big writing-table when Adrian and his wife entered, and he had an odd fleeting sense that the little company seemed divided into two camps—he and Alys ranged against the others.

But the vague fancy swiftly flickered out before the issues at stake. Adrian had taken one blow manfully, but a second would be harder to bear. He had striven to maintain a neutral mind, but in spite of reason and resolve, he was inclining—and he knew it—to the belief that the will was genuine. The thought of dispossessing Lesley, which had prompted his quixotic impulse in the Round Room, was hateful to him, but while he had no desire for riches, five mortal years of the mill-round had taught him that it is only a fool who despises the power of money. To him it would give freedom from ungrateful toil, time and breathing space to do the work congenial to him, deliverance from haunting, harassing care. Now was this liberty to be granted him, or must he bow his neck to the yoke again? A moment would tell, for with a little preliminary legal cough, Mr. Ferrier prepared to speak.

"I have asked only the immediate members of the family to be present who have been actually in the house since Mr. Richard Skene's death, or rather, I should say, his funeral, as this document which I now hold in my hand calls for some further inquiry. The trustees are also necessarily present, but I know that, if needful, I can wholly count upon their discretion," with a glance toward Lord Polmont and Sir Neil, who responded with mechanical bows. What was to follow this surprising beginning?

"My partner," went on Mr. Ferrier, in his dry, colourless voice, "who is more conversant than I with the affairs of Strode, is, I regret to state, too ill for me to consult with him on the matter, but I am aware that he had our late client's positive assurance that all important documents were in our hands or in the library here, which doubtless led to a less thorough examination of the other repositories of the deceased, which I am sure Mr. Dalmahoy would be the first to deplore. Your letter, Miss Home, explains the finding of this document in a bureau in the Round Room, which, I understand, adjoins the late Mr. Skene's dressing-room. May I ask how the keys came into your possession? Pardon me," as Lesley opened astonished eyes, "I have a reason for the question."

"Mr. Dalmahoy gave them to me along with some others when he left here after the funeral," said Lesley.

"And they were in his possession or your own until, with the assistance of Mr. Adrian Skene, you began a week ago to examine and destroy the old letters?"

"No," said Lesley, a sudden note of discomfort in her voice.

"No," struck in Adrian, in the same breath, "Miss Home gave me the keys a few days previously, and asked me to keep them until we should have time to look over the papers together."

Mr. Ferrier turned his cold gaze upon the young man.

"And have you any reason to suppose that anyone could have had access to the keys while they were in your charge, so that the bureau could be tampered with?"

"Really, I can't say," said Adrian. "I admit that I did not take very special care of them. I did not keep them under lock and key, as I never dreamed there was anything of importance in the bureau. But is there any question of tampering? Why are you asking these questions?" with a sudden touch of haughtiness.

"I am making these very necessary inquiries," said Mr. Ferrier slowly, "because, while the body of the will is a genuine document, the signature is—forged!"

Forged! The word was like the plunging fall of a stone into deep water. Blank amazement, dumb consternation, held everyone silent for a moment, then "Forged!" was echoed in every tone of disbelief and wonder.

Adrian set his teeth. The bubble of vain hopes had burst with a vengeance, for, fool that he was, he had allowed himself to hope. A shuddering sigh, like the breath that precedes dissolution, came from the depths of Alys's chair, and he turned anxiously towards her. Her face was turned away, pressed against the dull buff leather of the chair. He could only see the waxen curve of one cheek and a delicate ear under a wave of russet hair. He would fain have put his hand on hers, and murmured some word of cheer, but inborn reticence forbade, and pride wished that she could have presented a braver front—cruel though the blow was. But for the moment its smart was almost forgotten in amazement at the manner in which it had fallen.

"Dear—dear—dear!" fussed Lord Polmont. "You are quite sure of this, Mr. Ferrier? How could it be done?"

"That is what we have to discover, but of the fact there is no doubt whatever. The forgery is cleverly executed. At the first glance I was almost deceived by it, but a closer scrutiny aroused some doubt, and as this was confirmed by our head clerk, who has charge of all the Strode papers, I submitted it to two eminent experts, both of whom have unhesitatingly pronounced it to be a forgery. Your second question is harder to answer, Lord Polmont. Those keys, I am assured, were never out of the possession of the deceased in his lifetime, but it is inconceivable that the forgery could have been executed before his death or before the contents of the will were made known. Immediately after the death Mr. Dalmahoy assumed charge of all the deceased's keys and private effects. On leaving he gave the keys to Miss Home, and Miss Home, as we have just heard, passed them on to Mr. Adrian Skene. May I ask you, Miss Home, if you think it possible that anyone could have got access to the keys while they were in your care?"

"No," faltered Lesley, battling for a desperate moment with the temptation to admit some carelessness. Something monstrous, wholly

inconceivable, but which yet would have to be faced, was looming up dark before her, and before each man and woman present. "Like my cousin, I understood that there was nothing of any special importance in the bureau, or in my uncle's rooms, but I put all the keys into my jewel-case."

"Then we can only regret that Mr. Skene did not exercise the same care," said the lawyer drily.

For a moment Adrian made no reply. His pride would have taken fire at Mr. Ferrier's tone, but the matter was too serious for such personal considerations, and he was absorbed in the effort to recall what he had done with the keys after Lesley had given them to him. He had been culpably careless, certainly, but who could have dreamed that such a reckoning would be demanded for a little harmless heedlessness? He had found them in his pocket, on his return from his morning's round—he remembered it now—and had put them into a drawer of his dressing-table, but who was likely to be in his dressing-room save the servants of—good heavens! no—not that! That was wholly impossible! How could such a base thought ever have crossed his mind?

"Come, Mr. Skene," broke in Mr. Ferrier with a subtle change of tone, "have you no suggestion to make? I am sure that no one can be more anxious than yourself that this distressing business should be cleared up. It seems impossible to doubt that the contents of the bureau were examined, this hitherto unknown document found, and the forgery executed, which, pardon me saying it, so entirely alters the relative positions of yourself and Miss Home, and all this while the keys were—well, nominally in your possession. I surely need not say another word."

He would never have had space to utter so much, but, as Adrian Skene would have sprung to his feet and flung back the barely-veiled accusation and the hideous doubt with it, Alys drew herself out of the depths of her chair and turned to her husband. Every eye was fixed on Adrian, expecting that hot and instant repudiation, but a dead and dreadful silence fell and lengthened, for in that decisive moment, big with the fate of his name and honour, he saw nothing but his wife's face.

And that face! The mediæval frescoes of the tortures of the damned now strike the note of the grotesque rather than the awful, and yet amid the rout of writhing forms and busy demons there stands out some face, stamped not only with helpless, shrinking horror, with frantic, despairing appeal, but with such a realising of utter hopeless loss that the careless smile of the onlooker dies away and the blood chills.

And as his wife leaned towards him with that despair, that vain appeal in her little waxen face, her grey eyes wells of anguish, Adrian Skene's heart turned to stone within him. The hot words which had sprung to his lips froze there, as the blood seemed slowly freezing in his veins.

It was Alys, his own wife, who had done this unspeakable thing, the woman whom he

had taken to himself for better, for worse, who now cried to him for succour out of her voiceless torment. What was he to do?

What but the one thing could a man do? And yet if it had been his life she had claimed instead of this—this—

But it was his *life* she asked—the life of an honourable man amid his fellows—what did the tarnished remainder matter? There and then he took his farewell of that brave, clear life, and looked his last upon familiar faces: faces on which he no more than the dead could hope to look upon again—the face of the woman he loved—of the upright, honest man who loved her—who was now his judge—

The wonder in Lesley's eyes grew to distress, in Sir Neil's to doubt, as blank despair dulled the young man's dark, eloquent face. The silence, so portentous to Adrian, grew intolerable to all.

"Adrian—you are a Skene—remember that!" came thin and strained from Lady Marchmont's quivering lips, as the wind might shrill through a dry reed.

Sir Neil sprang to his feet. With all his heart he loved the fair woman beside him. Instinct told him that more than ought else early memories and, it might be, something softer and tenderer stood between him and his desire. Yet because he truly loved, he forgave himself for that moment, and divined what Lesley was feeling. Things looked black enough, but since *she* cared for Adrian Skene he could not have done this thing.

"Skene, for God's sake, speak!" he exclaimed. "We can't but see what Ferrier is driving at, but none of us believe it—it can't be—it isn't possible, but speak—deny it!"

The vibrant echoes of the appeal had time to throb out and die into the silence before from stiff lips there came the answer in two words:

"I—can't."

Not another word was uttered. Even to Lord Polmont the shock was too great. A faint gasp from Alys passed unheeded. For the moment she was forgotten.

Adrian did not lift his eyes. Like enough he saw nothing of it at the moment, but the fleur-de-lys on the faded carpet at his feet was branded on his memory for ever. If he had wronged her in thought though never in intention, it was a full cup which Alys, his wife, had wrung out and put to his lips. But that cup was not yet drunk to the dregs, no, never would be till life had run out. Before even Mr. Ferrier had recovered himself enough to ask what was to follow, Adrian rose and said heavily:

"There is nothing more to say. I am to your hands—you can do with me as you think best, but you will find me in my room when—when you have decided."

Putting out a groping hand, as if the full cold daylight were darkness, he moved towards the door without looking round. The high dark head was sunk, the shoulders seemed to stoop already under their load of shame.

Was this her Cousin Adrian who had flung that lying paper into the fire, and would have

watched it burn with a smile? It could not be—no one man was capable of the two actions. He—or they—must be under some monstrous delusion. Before he could reach the door Lesley had sprung forward to his side, and seized his arm with the clutch as of one drowning.

"Adrian!" she cried, in a voice which none there ever forgot, and which told its own story.

Alys, who had fallen back as if in a stupor, sat suddenly erect, the pinched terror of her face crossed by some other emotion, hard to read, but none had eyes for her.

"Adrian, you must not, you shall not go! You have not done this thing—you could not do it—I will never believe it. You said you could not deny it—God knows what you mean, but I challenge you"—the brown eyes were ablaze with passionate, desperate appeal—"look me in the face, and say that you did it—then—I shall let you go."

Like the shudder that runs through a tree before its final crashing fall, when the trunk has been all but severed by the axe, a quiver ran through Adrian's tall figure. For one instant he lifted the dark anguish of his gaze in a last look, then the words came, one by one:

"You—must—let—me—go."

It was time, for flesh and blood could endure no more. Lesley fell back as if he had struck her on the face. Alys, who sat breathing hard, a red spot like the impress of a bruising finger upon each cheek-bone, dropped with a faint cry back into her chair.

"Poor child—poor child—none of us have been thinking how terrible this is for her!" exclaimed Lord Polmont.

Adrian mechanically stooped over her, as if he would have lifted her from the chair, but Lesley suddenly stepped between.

"Don't touch her, she shall be my care. Go—since you must," she said hoarsely.

And Adrian Skene went, leaving behind him love and honour and all for which a man gives his life-blood and counts it a light thing.

PART II.

CHAPTER XIII.

THROUGH the lowered sunblinds the June sunlight was filtering into a room which, in its elegant bareness, the last word of the modern revolt from over-ornamentation and over-furnishing, might have served as a background for one of Orchardson's pictures. The resemblance would have been complete had its two occupants, instead of the man's conventional frock-coat and the girl's gauzy white draperies, worn eighteenth-century dress. Under such a title as "*Solitude à deux*" it would have made a very charming *genre* picture, a graceful embodiment of that old story which never fails to touch and to please, to awaken the sigh and the smile of memory or of hope. But the strained anxiety, the hardly-suppressed pas-

sion on Sir Neil Wedderburne's face were emotions too keen and virile for such pleasant drawing-room art.

He had succeeded in persuading Lesley to accept his sister's eagerly-urged invitation to spend some weeks of the season with her, and had meant to be content for the moment with seeing Miss Home and Lady Marchmont installed in Mrs. Kenyon's pretty London house—a victory indeed to his persistence. But with more sympathy than prudence, Agatha Kenyon had chosen to efface herself this afternoon, and from the friendly talk which long habit had made so easy and familiar between Lesley and himself, Sir Neil found himself hurried, he hardly knew how, into hot avowal of the love which had grown strong in silence.

And there was excuse enough for him. The past two years, which had seen Lesley mistress of Strode, had done more than bring her fairness to its full and perfect bloom. The responsibility of a great position had added to it dignity and a touch of command, which her stately young grace could well carry. Greatest change of all, in these two years she had sounded the depths of her own nature, she had been brought face to face with the hidden things of life—a searching experience which leaves its traces not only upon the character but sets its mark upon the face. Lesley's eyes had lost nothing of their frank confidence, their open sincerity, but they had gained a wider outlook, a new softness.

It may have been that softened look which had now been Sir Neil's undoing. When three years ago he had first seen Lesley Home, he had vowed that if man might he would make this woman his wife, but even then, and much more since the brief and tragic interlude of Adrian Skene's appearance at Strode, he had realised that his cause would not be served by haste.

Now had he ruined all the hopes which he had built up with such long patience, such sore self-repression? In the parti-coloured light and shadow from the gaily-striped sunblinds without he could not read the expression on the girl's half-averted face as she stood by the window, widely opened to the faint June breeze. For half a lifetime, as it seemed to him, there was no sound in the room save the roll of swift wheels or the hoot of a motor from the square without; and yet he was no impatient lad, burning in his first fever-fit of love, but a man, sobered, experienced, toughened in the world's ways.

"Lesley, have you not a word for me?" he said at last. "Surely I have been patient long enough—too patient, I sometimes think," rather bitterly.

"You have been everything that a friend could be," said Lesley gently. "I should not like to lose my friend," turning impulsively round, a wet gleam in those softened brown eyes.

"While I live you shall never want a friend," said Sir Neil; "but, Lesley, I at least want more. Is it to be always a friend and only a friend? It is much, but it's not enough. Lesley—my love," his voice suddenly breaking,

"can't you give me what I want—I have wanted it so long."

"I don't know," faltered Lesley. "I am afraid I cannot give you what you—what you want."

"Then give me what you can," cried Sir Neil, with sudden passion; "give me what you can. I ask no more."

Lesley was silent. Unconsciously her fingers had closed upon a marguerite from the gay window box without, and now the narrow white petals fell as fast as though she had been putting the old augury to test.

"Lesley," Sir Neil broke the silence again, and there was a curious change in his voice, "forgive me—don't answer me if you think I have no right to ask it—perhaps I haven't—but—but is there anyone between us?"

There was a pause, and then Lesley said steadily, "No."

"Then I shall plead for myself. You don't call a hungry man selfish if he prays for bread." The sudden relief gave a new ring to his voice.

"Oh, stop, I beg you!" broke in Lesley, a sudden breathless hurry in her voice. "I know it seems foolish, unreasonable, unkind, after all that you have done for me. Believe me, I do know how to value it, and—and you," with a quick, upward glance like the shy confidence of a child, infinitely touching in contrast with her usual calm, gracious control. "But won't you wait—wait till I am at home again? I don't know whether it is this busy London, but I feel as if I couldn't think, couldn't decide here. Wait till I am at Strode again—is it too much to ask?"

Sir Neil's face darkened. He made a swift turn up and down the room, and it was as well that there was not the usual crowd of useless tables and chairs to impede his hasty steps. Then he came back to Lesley's side.

"I think you hardly know how much you ask. It is my fault, perhaps. I have let you think that there is no end to my patience, and a patient wooer has himself to blame, I suppose, if he is thought a slack one. I have waited long, but it is not indifference which has kept me silent, and I think you know it, Lesley." Her eyes faltered from his. She did know it—too well. "But since you ask it, I will wait a little longer—if only I might wait in hope," with a sudden reversion from his almost dogged tone to eagerness.

He caught her hand and gazed earnestly into her face, then he dropped it with an impatient sigh.

"Well, till we are in Glen Falla again, I won't bore you about myself. I want you to have a good time here with Agatha," he said in almost his usual voice as he turned to leave the room. At the door he paused, as if for some farewell word or look, but Lesley was still standing by the window looking absently out.

She started violently when Lady Marchmont's voice, in its briskest tones, broke in upon those apparently absorbing thoughts.

"I met Sir Neil in the hall just now. I gathered that you hadn't sent him away quite despairing."

"It would have been more honest, perhaps, if I had," said Lesley gravely.

"Nonsense, my dear, he'll be more than satisfied with what you can give him, and as he is ready to give you all he is and all he has, don't you think you might try to be satisfied too? Most people would think you had every reason to be. 'If you cannot have what you would like, it is well to like what you can have,' is the chief wisdom of life, and it has carried me at least through a fairly long one very comfortably. Not many of us get the chance to pick and choose. We are well off if even the second best is allotted to us."

"Poor Sir Neil," said Lesley, trying to smile, "I don't think he would care to be regarded as second best."

"That, my dear, would never occur to him, nor to any other man, so you may set your mind at rest. He'll think that you've come to your senses, or that his devotion has had its due effect, and certainly he has been very patient. Three years, or is it four, is more than patriarchal nowadays. Jacob's seven in his slow-going times is nothing compared with it. Seriously, Lesley, I wish you could bring your mind to it. Of course, I mean to live to a hundred, but I should like to see another generation at Strode before I go. I couldn't rest in my grave if I thought of the Skene-Wellwoods and their skinny brood in the old place."

"There might be other ways of preventing that than by marrying Sir Neil," said Lesley, with an attempt at a laugh.

"Where will you get a better man, upright, honourable?"—with perhaps the faintest emphasis on the last word—"but I needn't catalogue his qualities. You should know them far better than I. And let me tell you, though you mayn't believe it now, it is heartless work keeping a place warm for somebody else's children, or trying to find out how you can do the least harm with your money if you leave it to charities. If you didn't mean to be kind to Sir Neil at last, we should hardly be here, and with his sister Agatha acting chaperone for you."

"Sir Neil is too generous to take advantage of that," said Lesley hastily.

"H'm, perhaps he is, but the generosity shouldn't be all on one side, my dear."

Lady Marchmont was surprised and disappointed at what seemed to her Lesley's unaccountable indecision—no usual feature of the girl's character—but secretly she thought that her grandniece would find ere long that these very hesitations and delays would form themselves into a binding chain which she would find hard to break.

In the pause which fell between them Lady Marchmont hoped that Lesley was digesting her last words, when she suddenly said, in a changed voice and with what seemed to the old lady extreme and provoking irrelevance:

"I have been wondering since we came here if there is nothing more I could do to learn something of poor Alys."

"Poor Alys, indeed!" Lady Marchmont ejaculated, with the air of a warhorse snuffing



"'Adrian!' she cried, in a voice which none there ever forgot"—p. 145.

the battle, or as much of it as a dainty, dignified old lady could assume.

"I have always thought, in spite of all our failures," went on Lesley, "that very likely she is still somewhere in London. I often find myself watching the stream of faces, half expecting to see hers among them. To-day, in the crowd at the Corner, as we were coming out of the Park, I saw a girl so like her, the same pale face and the cloud of coppery hair, that I almost asked Mrs. Kenyon to stop."

"You didn't, I hope."

"No, she was gone again before I could have singled her out."

"Likely it was only some chance resemblance—that colour of hair is the fashion just now, there is plenty of it to be seen. But I cannot see why you should trouble about her any more—you have done enough and more than enough."

"No," said Lesley sadly, "I have not done enough; that is what weighs upon me. Since she left us I have indeed done all I could, but before that—I might, I ought to have done more. I took a charge on myself, and I didn't even try to fulfil it. I was very unhappy myself"—simply—"too unhappy to think what she must have been suffering, and when at last I did read it in her face, it was too late. It was the very day she disappeared, leaving only that miserable letter behind. I shall never forget her look and the way she shuddered away from me. If I had been kinder, if I had tried harder to make a friend of her—"

"Nonsense, my dear," sharply, "you may perhaps make bricks without straw, but you certainly can't make a friend when there is nothing to make one of. But why have you brought up that wretched time again?" with a protesting glance round the airy, sunny room, which seemed designed only for bright moments. "When you come to my years, you will learn to thank God for present peace, and let the past go. You will likely think me very hard-hearted if I say that things are better as they are, and that Alys did us the only service that she could in taking herself off."

"If only it had been in any other way," murmured Lesley, her eyes bright with pain. "If only I knew where she is."

Lady Marchmont shrugged her shoulders under their fluttering laces. "Better not stir muddy waters, my dear. Alys was probably nearer the truth than she thought when she wrote that the air of Strode was too rarefied for her, or something like that. But I think the little cockatrice had some kind of conscience, and it was that partly which drove her away. I can't bear to think of that horrible day, but whatever that dreadful avowal of Adrian's may have meant, I am certain that that wretched girl was at the bottom of it."

"You think so, too?" exclaimed Lesley, a sudden change in her voice. "I have often wondered."

"Think so—I am sure of it," Lady Marchmont swept on, heedless of the halting words. "But, for pity's sake, my dear, don't let us speak of this again. I thought I should have

died that day when I heard Adrian Skene's son make such a confession. If he had lifted his hand in anger and killed a man, it would at least have been a clean and honest crime, but a creeping, despicable forgery—and a forgery to despoil you! Faugh! don't let us speak any more of it."

"I can't believe it," exclaimed Lesley, hotly. "I couldn't believe it even at the moment when I bade him go. A man doesn't so belie his nature all at once."

"And how much did you know of his nature?" asked Lady Marchmont, with bitter shrewdness. "Or what five years' scramble for bread might make of it with a creature like Alys beside him, who I verily believe has no more notion of right and wrong than a cat when it licks the cream. There's nothing we can do. Adrian made that plain when he left Strode that night without a word or a sign. I wonder he didn't blow his brains out rather. Alys likely enough stole away to join him. I wish I could think better of the lad," a sudden pitiful crack in the thin, high voice, "but since I can't, the only thing is to try not to think of him, and sometimes I succeed. But spare me another talk like this; I can't bear it, indeed I can't!"

The little ring-laden hands were quivering, though tightly clasped. The faint colour had gone from the soft, withered face, leaving it blanched like a frosted rose. The weight of her years, usually so gracefully and gallantly carried, seemed suddenly to have descended upon her like a crushing burden.

CHAPTER XIV.

COULD she bear such another talk herself, Lesley wondered, when, having soothed Lady Marchmont as best she could and left her to rest, she returned to the drawing-room. By tacit consent Adrian Skene's name had dropped into silence among those who had once known him, and Lesley, too, had striven to raise barriers against memory, though every now and again it rose in a flood and swept her feeble defences away like so many straws. But though Lady Marchmont's philosophy, as Lesley had just had proof, did not extend far below the surface, in one point at least she was right, the girl concluded with a sigh—it was unwise to look back too much.

Seeking for something, anything to distract her thoughts from past blackness and from present doubt, Lesley picked up a book of poems, of which she had heard much, rather too much she was inclined to think, during her few days in town; but amid the quick succession of engagements she had not yet had time to look at it. This was her opportunity. At last she might have a quiet hour, as Agatha Kenyon had declared that she had a hundred things to do that afternoon.

At first Lesley turned the pages rather languidly. Mrs. Kenyon and some of her friends had rather wearied her by their enthusiasm and their speculations as to the unknown author of a book which had aroused keen interest,

such as, truth to tell, modern poetry but rarely does. Her thoughts at first were not on the words, but then the music of a line caught her ear, a thought struck home, and presently she found herself reading with a rapt, almost painful eagerness.

The poems seemed the utterances of one wandering in dry places, seeking rest and finding none. The cry of a soul ground down under the wheels of blind, unheeding Circumstance into black depths beyond the reach of justice—bare justice, if indeed justice or mercy existed in the chaos of life, where the hopes and aims and ambitions of men, their futile struggles towards a possible good, or fierce snatches at a petty, present prize seemed but the sport and plaything of Chance. At times there broke forth a fierce arraignment of a world into which man had been called only to suffer—the indictment of the poet-philosopher of the East:

"What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke,"

but now it was pressed with the personal passion and force of one who was galled by that yoke, who was sinking under its weight.

Lesley read on, pained to the quick, but with a breathless interest. Instead of words upon a printed page, she seemed to be hearing the cry of a heart to whom the heavens were as brass and the earth as iron, and as she read on the voice grew familiar.

Suddenly she laid the book down and, starting up, looked round her in desperate, half-terrified question. Had she been at home in Glen Falla, she would have sought the hills; she would have climbed up and up through the pine-woods and the dwindling birch-copses, out on to the wide loneliness and the spacious stillness of the open moor, but here, where could she go? She must have more air and space than this dainty room could afford. Its artificial prettiness jarred.

She went hastily out, through a quiet square or two, across the busy Kensington High Street, and into the Gardens. Their well-ordered greenness, the trim level walks hemmed in by trees, massy in their summer leafage, made her long anew for the wind-swept freedom of the hills, but it was at least better than four enclosing walls, and at this hour the paths under the great elms were at their quietest. The nursemaids had shepherded their flocks of children homeward, and the loitering "pairs" had not yet set out upon their evening rambles. In the green aisle into which she turned there was no one visible, and she drew a long breath of relief. She wanted to be alone with herself and with a new and startling thought.

In that book which she had just closed she believed that she had been hearing Adrian's voice. She was certain of it, beyond all question, and that not because the bitter waters of the past had been stirred, and he had been so present to her mind, but from a hundred little tokens which brought back to her such of his writing as she had seen, above all from

the instant response it evoked in her own nature.

But was it possible that the man whose soul was afire with revolt against life's cruelties, whose one passionate cry was "justice," could have been guilty of a "creeping, despicable" crime? In her heart she knew that she had never wholly believed it, not even when her last desperate appeal had struck no word of response from Adrian. It was not possible, but the only alternative—that he was bearing another's burden, that he, at the cost of all but life, was shielding someone—she feared to accept, lest prejudice and bias might render her unjust.

As she walked slowly along through the swathes of westering sunlight, falling athwart the path between the boles of the trees, she ceased setting up her futile defences, and let memory have its way for once. On that fatal day when Adrian Skene had left the library a disgraced man she had awakened to the full knowledge of her love for him, knew that had she been free to do it, she would willingly have followed him even through loneliness and dishonour. She was not ashamed of her love. It had been given all unconsciously as a free gift long before she knew of any barrier between her cousin and herself, but now she knew—ah, there to her pure heart and honest mind lay the difference.

Those had been black and bitter days when she had striven to sever from her life that love which had grown with the years, and had clasped its tendrils round her inmost heart. It had been a slow and heavy task, even though cold reason, the voices of friends who might venture to speak, and the hints of the many who dared not, had bidden her believe that the Adrian Skene whom she loved had never existed. The man who had yielded to so base a temptation was not the cousin whom she had idealised.

Since then she had blamed herself as only a generous nature can, that in these winter days she had been too absorbed in her own struggle. She had made too little effort to break through the wall of hard, cold silence behind which, after Adrian's disappearance, Alys had entrenched herself.

Now, instead of the golden-green of lime and elm which canopied and screened her in, she saw again the wide sweep of moor above Storde. After a day of bitter, grinding wind and sullen, low-hanging cloud, the sun at its setting had burst through in a wild flare of crimson, and standing out black against the boding sky was a forlorn and lonely figure. She was not alone, then, in seeking the silent relief of the "waste places." The dying, frosty light, the bleak wind, the sere heather were a fit setting for the white wretchedness of Alys's little pinched face.

A great swell of pity had broken up the ice about Lesley's heart.

"Alys," she had cried, "we are both unhappy—need we suffer alone? Is there no way in which I could help you?"

"*You help me!*" was all that Alys had said, but it was enough. Each word, hurled with

all the force of her misery behind it, was a bitter reproach, a fierce accusation.

Alone together in the fiery fading light, on the empty moor, the veil was rent away from between them. It was not Alys's suffering but her bitter hostility which had divided them, Lesley realised with a sudden pang, as, before she could speak, Alys had passed on swiftly, and the fleet, slim figure had been lost in the deepening dusk.

How often since then had that remorse swept over her, bringing with it, as it did now into the airless heat of a London evening, the chill of the wintry moorlands. For that was her last sight of Alys's face. Next morning the girl was gone, leaving behind her all that she had owed to Lesley's bounty and that biting letter of which Lady Marchmont had spoken. Like a wisp of vapour on the hills, Adrian's wife had vanished.

The shock of Alys's flight had forced Lesley from her inward struggles to seek self-forgetfulness without. She had thrown herself with new zeal into the affairs of the estate, those cares which attend "great possessions." Still more earnestly she set herself to consider the wants of the many lives dependent upon her, which she had now full power to relieve. In time she had her reward. She found distraction at first, then growing interest, and at times even forgetfulness by helping others. When Sir Neil had that day asked his pointed question, she had been able to answer him quite honestly, so she believed, that no one—and each knew to whom that vague term applied—stood any longer between them. That page of life was closed for ever, and conscience kept the seal.

Why, then, upon the blank pages which fronted her, could she not write another name—Neil Wedderburne? There had been ample time to prove him a generous friend, a good comrade, as well as a patient and devoted lover. Such a love fell to the lot of but few women. It was not lightly given nor to be lightly held. It was a great thing to have the happiness of such a man placed in her hands. What, then, had held her back to-day?

An approaching footstep made her glance round.

For a time she had been vaguely conscious that a distant figure far down the long green perspective was slowly drawing nearer. He was close at hand now, and, without interest or curiosity, but instinctively seeking momentary escape from a too insistent question, she mechanically looked up.

The ground heaved under her feet, the tall trees, soaring motionless into the serene sky, rocked and swayed—there before her, unless she were mad or dreaming—with the yellow evening sunlight full upon his face, was her Cousin Adrian!

"Adrian!" Her cry was as involuntary as the sudden leap of all her pulses.

At first it seemed as if he would have passed by. With the dazzle of light in his eyes, he may not have been conscious who this tall white figure was coming toward him out of the sunset, but at that cry he too stood still,

and across the black gulf of the past each looked the other in the face. The distant shouts of some children still at play, the multitudinous hum, the voice of the mighty city, encompassing this green, quiet place, had time to wax insistent before Lesley, forced into speech at last, if only to break the silence, exclaimed reproachfully:

"Adrian, would you have passed me by?"

At such moments in life what is there to say?

"Ghosts cannot speak unless they are spoken to, so we have always been told," said Adrian with a faint smile. "I am only re-visiting the glimpses of the moon. I did not expect to cross the path of the living, and least of all yours."

"But ghosts must answer if they are challenged," said Lesley, catching up his words to relieve the intolerable difficulty of speech. "Adrian, tell me about yourself."

"Myself?" with a dreary laugh, and Lesley repented her impulsive question.

If she had thought Adrian altered when he had first reappeared at Strode, what was that to the change wrought by the past two years? Though in the early prime of his days, it was no longer a young man who fronted Lesley in the green gloom which was beginning to thicken under the great trees. The youth had been struck from his face during those terrible silent moments in the library at Strode, while all waited breathless for the protest, the denial which never came.

"I have lived because I haven't died—I've been 'going to and fro on the earth and walking up and down in it.' Perhaps that's more descriptive than exact," went on Adrian in the same indifferent fashion. "I've been doing some foreign correspondence work, some friends of the old days, good souls who asked no questions, helped me to get it. It has served me well. I only came back a day or so ago to look for a fresh berth. But you?" The life stirred in his tone again, though he did not look up. "I suppose by this time I may congratulate you, or rather Sir Neil Wedderburne?"

"No," said Lesley gravely, and in that moment she knew that her question—God help and pity her—was answered to the full, "He deserves more than I can ever give him." The words fell with the weight of inevitable decision. And again there was silence between them.

"And—and Alys, where is she?" faltered Lesley at last.

At the name a sudden change swept over Adrian's face, like the passing swoop of a dark wing.

"I do not know," he said bitterly. "For a time I thought her safe with you, and—and blessed you for it, but—"

"Then you know nothing of her—nothing at all?" cried Lesley.

"No more than my fellow-dead," said Adrian, a sudden, despairing break in his voice. "It was all in vain—I did not even save her."

The words were uttered under his breath like the involuntary despairing sigh of unsleeping regret, but Lesley caught at them. It was

as if scales fell from her eyes. What till now had been trembling conjecture took solid shape as fact.

"Adrian, it was not by chance we have met now," she cried. "It was not by chance that I have been thinking and speaking of you to-day, not by chance that I opened that book, 'The Underworld.' It is *your* book. I know it, I feel it: I heard your voice in it, crying aloud out of the depths." Adrian neither assented nor denied, and Lesley went on, with mounting emotion, "At last we are face to face, let us have the truth out between us. Save for a moment on that last dreadful day, I have never really doubted you. Forgive me for that, for now I know that you have wronged no one but yourself. Is it the wrong-doer who cries for justice—justice—justice? Do justice to yourself, Adrian! You have suffered enough—sacrificed enough. Why should you bury your life and all your powers longer? I believe in you—I always will believe in you, but don't bruise my faith again. Give me one word, if it must be for myself alone, if you cannot speak it out to the world for the sake of—the one you are shielding." Adrian's look forbade her to utter the name that was on her lips.

"Stop!" he broke in, and the harsh, abrupt syllable held a world of vain, anguished longing.

He moved away a pace or two, and stood still. Lesley dared not speak, dared not thrust herself into the battle which was being waged in these few silent seconds. When Adrian came back to Lesley's side his voice was calm again.

"Lesley," he began, and the once familiar sound of her name upon his lips struck chill through all her ardour—so far-off, so hopeless it seemed.

"It is vain to thank you for what you have said, but I can say nothing in return. You are right, I am buried alive—the stone has been lifted a little, but when I leave you it will fall again, and I cannot put out a hand to stay it. But remember"—slowly—"it is my own doing, and I dare not even ask you to cherish that wonderful faith in me, for I can never defend myself—never clear my name. While life lasts there is no hope for me."

The blank finality of his words and tone stunned Lesley into silence. Protest and entreaty were alike vain.

"Have you far to go?" resumed Adrian, after a moment, in a voice determinedly repressed to quiet, every-day courtesy. "At least you must let me go with you out of the Gardens. I am afraid I have detained you too long already."

Lesley walked by his side through the June twilight as in a dream. It was time they were going. Already one or two passers had paused to stare curiously at them. Daily life pushed itself in again as it will intrude into the most sacred moments, as they exchanged the dusk of the trees for the flare and the bustle of the High Street. They passed through one quiet, echoing square, and then Adrian suddenly paused. Under a lamp, whose dull, yellow gleam was affronting the delicately-illuminated sky, he stood

still and looked long and earnestly into Lesley's face—the long look which a man bends on a beloved face ere the dread moment comes when he must bury his dead out of his sight. Then he lifted her hand and kissed it.

The touch roused Lesley from her numb silence.

"Adrian—for the sake of the old days—the days when you were so good to a lonely child—we cannot part like this. I cannot let you go! I cannot leave you under this burden. There must be something that we could do."

"Ah, that wonderful something!" said Adrian, with the same pale shadow of a smile with which he had greeted her. "No, there is nothing—nothing, so this is—good-bye."

He let her hand gently fall.

Lesley stood still where he had left her, watching the tall figure disappear down the long, empty stretch of white pavement, mechanically noting each flickering unneeded lamp which was swiftly left behind.

The stone which had closed again upon a man's living tomb had fallen, too, upon her own heart.

CHAPTER XV.

"I've got some good news for you," exclaimed Mrs. Kenyon gaily to the company in general.

Tea was going on, and the usual one or two friends had dropped in.

"At least it should be good news to all of us who are going to Sir Hartley Wilmot's to-night," she went on. "I own I thought it rather a *corvée*; though he is a dear old man, and it is a charming place, it is such an endless journey to reach it. Even in these days of motors, people shouldn't live so far out of town and yet expect one to come to their functions. You must really change your mind now," turning to Lesley.

Mrs. Kenyon had been only more disappointed than she was surprised by what she considered her brother's "unaccountable dawdling." She had so often in soaring fancy triumphantly carried through all the wedding arrangements to the slightest detail, that at times it was hard to realise that the first step towards it, and pre-eminently the one that counts, had not yet been taken. If only the affair were in her hands things would march, she firmly believed, so she had pressed her invitations upon Lesley once and again, and when at last she had welcomed Miss Home to her house, she had believed the battle was all but won. Still she had to admit that matters were not progressing with the speed she could have wished, in spite of all her schemes to throw the pair as much together as possible.

For the last day or two Lesley had seemed very languid and silent, more so, surely, than the sudden access of summer heat warranted. She had begged off from all engagements, and had rather avoided company, Sir Neil's included. She had urged the long drive as an excuse for not going to Sir Hartley's, though Mrs. Kenyon, with a darting vision of the possibilities of moonlit gardens, had with fine

inconsistency pleaded that the cool evening air would do her good.

"You haven't told us yet what the extra bait is. Why must I change my mind?" said Lesley smiling.

"Didn't I? Why, he has got hold of La Fiammetta."

"What, the woman who has been making such a stir by reciting from that weird book, 'The Underworld'?" exclaimed one of Mrs. Kenyon's guests, one of those men who dabble in literature and art, and are credited with a much more intimate knowledge of these and of their devotees than their surface acquaintance warrants.

Lesley's hand must have suddenly shaken, for the delicate china rattled slightly, and Mr. Dennison took her cup from her before he went on:

"She has made a wonderful vogue for herself, certainly, and all the more because of the exclusive pose she has taken up. To get people to gossip and speculate about you is the best advertisement nowadays, and we all know what advertisement can do," with a shrug. "Fame should exchange her trumpet for an evening paper with well-led head-lines. The one makes far more din than the other. Of course, the craze can't last unless she shows what she can do in some other line. Every season has its meteors—a blaze the one year, a burnt-out cinder the next."

"Some people say that she is the author of 'The Underworld' herself," put in Mrs. Kenyon, "and has taken this method of exploiting it. But I for one don't believe it. Whoever wrote it was in dead earnest."

"These are matters one is not at liberty to divulge," said Mr. Dennison, with an air of discreet reserve, "but, in my opinion, a woman, and especially one of that type, couldn't have kept a note of hysteria out of such a book, but the publishers could well afford to give her a special royalty for booming it as she has done. Odd, how that book has caught on everywhere."

"Not at all," said Lady Marchmont. "I don't appreciate the book, because it's not at all in my line. At my years one prefers the upper world, but a vast number of people will read it, just as they flock to a sensational trial, or years ago, when nerves were tougher, to a hanging, or before that to a fight of gladiators. They want a thrill—the excitement of real human pain without any suffering to themselves, and the more realistic your Fiammetta can make it, the more popular she will be."

"What is she like?" chimed in a pretty, fair girl.

"I haven't seen her yet," said Mrs. Kenyon. "She was to have been at the Delmore's, but failed them. She can afford to do that just now. Of course you have seen her?" with a smile at Mr. Dennison.

"Reminds one of Bernhardt when she was young."

Now that his baldness had become unfortunately pronounced, Mr. Dennison could allow himself a memory. "But one must admit that she has a distinction of her own. It

she is really to be at the Wilmot's to-night, you shouldn't miss seeing her."

"Of course we mustn't," said Mrs. Kenyon. "Although Lady Marchmont is so down upon us, I confess I enjoy a thrill—especially a new one."

"So do I," said the old lady promptly. "I never pretend to practise what I preach. That tends to make you very one-sided."

"That decides it, you must come too, Lesley," said Mrs. Kenyon.

Lesley made some vague reply and escaped as soon as she might from the easy, heedless chatter. To her it had been like pressure upon a recent bruise. In the solitude of soul in which Adrian was condemned to dwell she could well understand that some outlet for feeling had become a vital necessity, that without one human heart to which he could turn he had made the great brotherhood of the stricken his refuge. But it was more than she could bear to hear the words which had been forced from him by the weight of the burden that had crushed the youth from his face lightly discussed and jested over.

The evening's engagement, which had been merely a weariness before, now seemed for the moment intolerable, and yet as the hour in which she was supposed to be resting slipped away, there awoke within her a strange, restless desire to hear these words of Adrian's that had so thrilled her in the cold medium of print, uttered with all the added appeal of an impassioned human voice. It would be painful, horribly painful, like a sudden touch upon a bare nerve, but there are times when a quick, leaping pang seems a relief from dull, continuous aching.

That the long drive had had no more deterrent effect on society in general than on Mrs. Kenyon's party was apparent from the procession of motors and carriages slowly moving up the avenue at Morelands through the soft summer dusk. People grumbled loud and long at the distance and the trouble of going so far, but Sir Hartley and Lady Wilmot's invitations were eagerly schemed for, and their great house and the wonderful old gardens were thronged whenever they were thrown open. Nor did Lesley wonder at it when, having escaped at last from the slow progress up the avenue, with its heavy grind of wheels and reluctant pauses, the party strolled into the gardens, with Sir Neil, whom they found awaiting them, as guide.

Sir Hartley Wilmot, although a "new" man, was fortunately possessed of a reverent appreciation of the past, and having bought his beautiful place from the last representative of a family to whom nothing was left but an old house and an old name, he had set himself diligently to restore its ancient glories. The house had been almost in ruin, the garden had long been a wilderness, but now Queen Bess might have trod the great terrace as once she did long ago, and her courtiers have played bowls on the shaven emerald of the lawns, or, when safe from Gloriana's jealous eye, have wandered with her maids down the green alleys or by the Long Water, and yet have been un-

conscious of the lapse of centuries. Within the house, though they would at once have been at home in the great hall with the marvellous carving of its musician's gallery and oaken roof, the restoring of which had cost Sir Hartley fabulous sums, they would have been considerably bewildered by the changes which modern luxury had of necessity introduced into their stately dwelling.

Lady Marchmont and Mrs. Kenyon were soon surrounded by friends, and, nothing loth, returned to the house. Lesley preferred the gardens, which, after the long hot day, were a rapture of coolness and freshness and fragrance, and all those gracious sights and sounds, half seen, half heard, which attend the gentle oncoming of a June night. The formal stretch of the Long Water reflected the wavering gleam from one or two brilliantly-lit boats, and the soft illuminations which made the lawns and bowers enchanted ground. These earthly lights would pale ere long beneath the mounting majesty of the moon, but she had not yet lifted her white disc above the massed darkness of the trees. From the mullioned oriels of the old house, set wide to the sweet night, the light fell in broad yellow streams, and with it came wafts of music and laughter and gay voices.

As Lesley and Neil Wedderburne walked slowly by the lake, the sheen of the irradiated water lay on their one hand, while from the bank of flowering shrubs upon the other a dew-drenched bough, blossom-laden, would now and again touch cheek or brow as with a caress. The whole scene, in its subtle blending of the natural and the artificial, the present and the past, had a swift appeal, lulling and yet intoxicating to the senses and the emotions. In that Armida's Garden of languorous light and soft shadow the slowest pulse would quicken.

Love was its natural language, and to walk alone with a fair woman was to woo her.

Lesley's instinct soon told her that it would go hard with the man by her side to keep his promise. Alone with the woman he loved in this beguiling, rose-flushed radiance which was neither calm night nor sober day, was he likely to wait till they were back again amid the pines and the birches and in the keen, clear air of Glen Falla before he claimed her answer? With that consciousness, the feeling which had been growing during the past days, that in justice to her friend she should let him cherish no more vain hopes, sprang suddenly to a resolve.

"Neil," she said suddenly, and the man beside her started. She had never called him by his name before, "there is something I feel that I ought to tell you—I met my cousin Adrian a few days ago."

They were leaning on the mossy balustrade, against which the water lapped in gentle ripples of liquid light. Sir Neil made no immediate reply. He picked up a tiny piece of loose mortar and aimed it, apparently with great deliberation, at the roseate shimmer from the lights of a passing boat.

Since he had made his generous appeal in the library, Adrian Skene's name had never

been mentioned between Lesley and himself, save for some brief passing reference when Sir Neil had been assisting her in her efforts to trace Alys. His first natural feeling had been that no one of his own class could be guilty of such a crime. "No decent fellow could do such a low thing." He had not been wholly convinced even by Adrian's avowal, but when it was followed by his silent departure, his dumb acceptance of the terms that he must never return to Strode, nor seek to communicate with anyone there, Neil Wedderburne had given him up. Still, like an honest man, he had striven not to let his judgment be biased by prejudice against one who in other circumstances might well have been a successful rival.

"So he is alive, then. I rather wonder at it," was all he could bring himself to say. "Was he able to tell you anything of—of his wife? Lady Marchmont's theory always was that she must have joined him," he added, after a moment, sending another fragment skimming after the first.

"He knows no more of her than we do," said Lesley, her eyes following the flight of the missile as if all depended upon it. "Somehow I have a strange feeling that I might meet her anywhere. But that is not what I must speak of. Neil, you have given me a love, such as is offered to few women"—now she turned and faced him, the play of delicate, changing colours falling strangely on her grave face and sorrow-charged eyes. "I would give all I have to be able heartily and wholly to give mine in return—so why should we not speak the truth openly to each other. Some might think it strange, unwomanly of me, but I don't believe you will, and since it is all I can do, I want you to understand."

"I think I do understand," said Sir Neil hoarsely. One thing he knew—his house of hope, which had seemed to be rising so fair and so solid, was trembling to its foundations.

"Not quite," said Lesley, in the same low, even tone. "When you spoke to me a few days ago I wanted, and, indeed, I hoped, to be able to give you the answer you wished, but an hour later I met my cousin Adrian, and then I knew that nothing was changed—that I couldn't—and it is only right that you should know. We met in Kensington Gardens by some strange chance. I think you have always divined it, so why should I be ashamed to say that before either of us realised what love was, we loved each other, but when he took shame and open disgrace upon himself, then—I knew. When we said good-bye a few evenings ago, it was like the parting of death. In some other life we may meet again, but never in this—nor would I seek it." Her eyes fixed on his were as steady as her voice. "And since we speak no evil of the dead, I should like you to think no evil. Though he has said no word, I know that it is not his own burden which he is bearing; but since he will not speak, I have no right to say more."

Wedderburne was silent. He could not consider Adrian Skene's possible innocence at that

moment. Rather, a hard, bitter anger was rising against him. If only he had not appeared again and played upon Lesley's generosity and her loyalty to old days, as seemingly he had done, all might yet have been well, was Sir Neil's not unnatural feeling. Since he dared not utter it, he had for the moment no other words, and Lesley went on in the same tone of determined effort—she would say what she had resolved to say—

"Some women can bury their beloved dead, and yet they can love again, but, Neil, I cannot; and, knowing this, I can't take your all and give you so little in return. I know what you would say," her voice quickening, "your love is so great it would make up for that, but it couldn't. You may not think so now, but some day you would learn, and as for me, I couldn't bear it. It would become a burden that would weigh me to the earth—"

"And are you to sacrifice all your life to a memory?" broke in Sir Neil at last. "My dear love, I thank you—I honour you—for what you have told me, though I think I always knew it. Your happiness must come before my hopes, and if you tell me that my love could never make you happy, then—that is the end," in a hard, difficult voice. "But, Lesley," for who could let the dream of years go in a moment, "as the days go on even the tenderest memory fades—it must if we are to live—"

A gust of voices and laughter scattered the stillness; with a rustle of skirts light footsteps came hurrying down the path.

"Miss Home, I have been seeking you everywhere," exclaimed Mr. Dennison, detaching himself from the approaching group. "I have been collecting the stragglers. La Fiammetta is about to make her appearance, and I know you want to hear her. We shall have to make haste."

Mrs. Kenyon would not have thanked him for his over-zeal, nor did Wedderburne. He brought down an angry hand with bruising force upon the balustrade, and clenched his teeth upon a word very uncomplimentary to Mr. Dennison, as Lesley, too surprised to resist, was swept away, not perhaps wholly reluctant, in the excited group.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHETHER Mademoiselle Fiammetta's fate would be, according to Mr. Dennison, but to blaze and to vanish, there could be no question as to the brilliance of the blaze for the moment. From the illumined gardens, from the picture gallery, from the cushioned, palm-screened nooks which invited to *solitude à deux*, even from the supper-tables in the panelled dining-room, people came thronging into the hall.

Even the silvery notes of a world-famed *prima donna* had failed to attract such numbers, but while everyone was gratified to know that their host had provided the best music, just as he had provided the best champagne, for their entertainment, the queen of song was

no longer the very latest novelty of whom everyone was talking. To hear her was of course always a pleasure, but it was one which might be enjoyed again, and as everything that could be said had already been said about her, she no longer afforded any special interest as a topic of conversation.

The hall, with its cavernous, arched roof, was, in spite of innumerable lamps, a playground of lights and shadows.

"Odd that Wilmot won't have electric light here—thinks it an anachronism, I suppose, but it seems rather like blacking yourself all over to play Othello," Lesley heard someone say, as Mr. Dennison piloted his convoy through the throng pressing towards the further end of the hall, where the wide arched recess under the musician's gallery was suggestively screened off.

Others beside him were desirous of obtaining a nearer view for themselves and their party, and with such an object in view some society ladies use the methods of the average crowd. Just as the coveted front row was attained, an intrepid dame jostled Lesley so sharply that she was forced almost violently against the man next to her. She turned towards him with a word of apology, but the slight mechanical smile froze upon her lips.

The man was Adrian Skene—Adrian whom never upon earth had she expected to meet again.

In the world to which he had returned men ask no questions, and though the one or two friends of whom he had spoken saw that some cloud had passed over his life, that was no concern of theirs. To-night one of them, a clever journalist, had urged Adrian to accompany him to Sir Hartley's.

"You ought to hear that woman, Fiammetta, as she calls herself. It's a new sensation, and that's saying a great deal nowadays. To hear her give that poem 'Buried Alive'—I hope she'll do it to-night—makes you feel the whole thing. You realise it all, or rather for the time you are the poor beggar himself, crushed under a mountain of injustice and misunderstanding, as if the clods had been shovelled over him and trodden down. Come and hear for yourself, though, and then tell me if I am rhapsodising," as Adrian listened with his faint, half-ironical smile.

Go and hear "Buried Alive"—the words which had been wrung from him before the searing anguish of the earlier days had been forced down to despairing endurance, though the smouldering fires would at times leap up fierce and high again, as when, under the Kensington elms, he had looked into Lesley's face. Could he risk that heightened torment again, even if he were willing to venture himself once more into the society of his kind, where, to his morbid sensitiveness, it seemed to him that the brand upon him must appear, naked and visible, to all?

In the end, as with Lesley, desire conquered—the desire to hear his own words uttered by human lips and openly swaying human hearts. It was the only share he could ever claim in the wide and sudden fame into which his

book had sprung, nor did he wish for any other. It had been written as with his heart's blood, and he could not barter that for earthly success in any form. Upon the hitherto unknown woman who, to his deep chagrin, had so singularly identified herself with "The Underworld," and had leaped into notoriety along with it, he had bestowed more than a passing wonder, but that and every other sensation was blotted from his mind when he turned and found Lesley close by his side, so close that, when she looked round, her breath was on his cheek and the warm whiteness of her arm touched his sleeve.

For one instant the sense of her near presence encompassed and possessed him, he could think of naught beyond, and in that instant, while they stood face to face, the curtains fronting them were parted and swept aside.

Swept aside to reveal—Alys! Alys who for two long years had been sought for in vain.

Only life-long training and inherited breeding stopped the cry on Lesley's lips. Involuntarily her hand closed tight on Adrian's arm, and through glove and sleeve she could feel the tense quiver of hard-held excitement. It was an Alys whom she had never seen nor dreamed of, but Alys beyond any possibility of doubt or mistake.

Her grey, dilated eyes, which seemed to dwarf the little passion-pale face, held a world of bitter wonder which yet was not altogether wonder, of jealous wrath and woe, as her transfixing glance lighted upon her husband and Lesley standing side by side, the girl's hand clasping Adrian's arm, the wave of emotion called up by their unexpected meeting not yet wholly merged in the stricken amazement with which they returned her gaze.

To the audience the parting curtains had revealed a tall and strikingly slender woman, a girl rather. She seemed the taller for her floating draperies of gauzy, transparent black, through which with every slight graceful movement there glanced a gleam of vivid green. These flowing folds were girdled and clasped with great green stones, which, like the emeralds encircling the slim white throat and resting upon the coppery hair, seemed to give out a cold, malign ray. That coppery hair, the brighter for the contrast with the green glimmer of the emeralds, framed a small oval face of an unnatural waxen pallor, lit by eyes fixed in a gaze—appealing, accusing, denouncing—which?

"Jove! what a Medea she'd make! They should have given her a cauldron instead of that lamp beside her," muttered someone, and the tall, slight figure with its mystic, shadowy garments and the cabalistic suggestions of the flashing green ornaments, might well have seemed the priestess of some mysterious cult.

While each drew a long breath the hush of keen and eager curiosity lasted, heightened by Fiammetta's strange intense look, which all imagined was but part of the pose, save those who had once seen a slim black figure steal into the library at Strode.

Then Fiammetta swiftly reared her head, swept her eyes over her audience, and, with a

slight, graceful, swaying motion of her hands began to speak. The stillness of curiosity deepened to eager, painful absorption, as that thrilling voice, strangely deep for so fragile a physique, unveiled the inmost throes of a heart prisoned within itself, buried alive in its own despair—and that to an audience whose chief perplexity was a choice of pleasures!

To one of her hearers—to Adrian Skene—each word was torture. If he could, he would have escaped from the sound of that voice, escaped from his position by Lesley's side, but he could not force his way through the serried listening ranks behind him. The silken threads of convention held him like iron bands. With all his might he had striven to think mercifully of the woman for whom he had sacrificed more than life, to remember the girl who had loved him rather than the wife who had ruined him, who in her mad, mistaken folly had rendered him an outcast. After all she was little more than a child, small wonder that she had blenched when the pinch of trial came, that she had made no effort to stay the stone which her own rash hands had set rolling. Could he have allowed his wife to take up such a burden, even had she been willing? But she had not been willing. She had not even sent one word or sign after him in all his far wanderings, while he had been learning how existence may go on, though life has ended.

And now the miserable mockery of it—that after these years which the locust had eaten, after his fruitless search, his bitter dread of her possible fate—a waif in the wide and friendless world—they should meet thus! She in these jewelled fripperies pouring out that "exceeding great and bitter cry" which he had been forced to utter if reason were to keep her seat, in these days when to him Time had seemed

"A maniac scattering dust
And Life a fury slinging flame."

Had she known that the words were his it might have seemed some tardy and fantastic attempt at atonement, but how could she know? He forgot that this was no longer the undeveloped girl of whom his last memory, the image he had carried away with him, was an embodied Fear. He forgot, too—since, for all he had endured, he had not suffered it—the torturing power of the consciousness of guilt, a force which drives deep furrows and lays mind and heart open to the reception of new and strange seed.

Soon he forgot still more as that passion-charged voice filled all the listening silence. He forgot himself and his surroundings, the memories which lay so deep and dark between him and the woman who was holding every eye, thrilling every heart, forgot even what the words which she was uttering signified to himself, forgot everything but her strange power, her consummate art.

When the wonderful voice suddenly dropped from the heat and the height of the indictment against the Fate which makes but to unmake, to the lowest note of that despair which sees

the futility of its puny revolt, Fiammetta stood still, breathing quick and hard, her eyes wide but fixed like a sleep-walker's, while for an appreciable pause not a sound broke the stillness. Then the oaken beams above thrilled to a burst of applause very different from the decorous, perfunctory acknowledgment which such an audience usually accords even to those who have had the good fortune to please it.

"She has a fortune in her voice!"

"Voice! The voice is nothing to the power behind it."

"It is too dreadful; she made me feel as if it were real, but surely no one could be quite so unhappy in this world," were some of the hasty comments exchanged, the last in a plaintive woman's voice.

Lesley could not speak, could not think, dared not look at the man beside her. In her own suffering she had seemed to herself to have been "alone on a wide, wide sea," but now limitless horizons seemed opening before her, and she shrank appalled as from Infinity.

At that sudden storm of applause Fiammetta started slightly like one roused from a dream, and, with unsmiling mouth and eyes from which the light had gone out, she mechanically swept the deep stage curtsey in return. Again the cheering broke out, and again in the same trance-like fashion she was about to acknowledge it, when suddenly the slender figure swayed, wavered. She flung out a hand to steady herself, and clutched at the tall standard lamp in the circle of strong light from which she had been standing.

A crash—a fall—a scream! The applause changed to a hoarse shriek as a sheet of flame sprang up and wrapped the slight falling figure in its fiery folds. The gauzy floating draperies were wings of flame.

Fire! fire! The old hall had echoed to the clash of arms and to many a fierce cry, but never to one more horror-struck.

With one bound Adrian Skene was on the platform, with one grasp he tore down one of the heavy screening curtains, and flung himself upon the writhing figure, heedless of the streams of blazing oil which were licking about his feet and spreading the fiery terror ever wider and further. Next instant half a dozen men, Neil Wedderburne amongst them, were by his side striving to stamp down the flames, to smother them with rugs or curtains, to hold them back at all hazards from the panelling, tinder-dry with age, until water could be brought.

The hall was in wild confusion, Sir Hartley summoning the household, some calling for water, some for a doctor, others screaming and rushing to and fro panic-stricken. Lady Marchmont, who, since the first parting of the curtains, had sat in rigid, keen-eyed stillness, pulled the woman by her side down into a chair.

"Sit down and hold your tongue; surely you're fit for that at least. Since you can't help you needn't hinder," she said with a biting emphasis, against which even hysterical fright was not proof.

Adrian had gathered the moaning girl into

his arms—a formless shape still swathed in the trailing folds of the heavy curtain. The air was thick with smoke and bitter with the reek of the fire, now hissing out into blackness under the splashing water.

"Let me help you—you're not fit. Look at your hands!" exclaimed a bystander as Adrian moved stumbling forward with his burden towards fresher air.

"She is my wife," was all the reply.

CHAPTER XVII.

"It is only a question of time—and, I fear, a very short time. To attempt anything is only to torture her more," said the great doctor under his breath. He had been one of the guests, and had instantly offered his services.

The injured girl, to whom every breath was agony, had been carried no further than to the great Watteau saloon beyond the hall. The long range of windows, widely opened for air, overlooked the Long Water, still shimmering with soft, reflected radiance, and the dusky gardens where the lamps yet glimmered, while, serene and cold, the moon sailed high above, giving a strange, ghostly air of unreality to those unheeded lights twinkling over empty paths and deserted bowers.

Within, the long resplendent vista of the vast room, the gay and gracious forms of nymph and cupid and lady-fair, which smiled and frolicked upon ceiling and walls, formed a strange setting to the anxious group around that prostrate figure, stretched straight and still, as if already rigid in death. But from the parted lips came a low continuous moaning, and life fierce and terrible looked out from the eyes and convulsed the little waxen face. By some miracle it was uninjured, though the fire had laid a searing finger upon Adrian's brow, leaving its red brand there.

Alys caught the doctor's low murmur, for hearing, like every other faculty and nerve, seemed heightened to feverish activity by her fiery torment. It was nature's last rally before the final collapse, the last flare of the candle before it gutters black into the socket.

"Am I dying?" she cried, her voice a hoarse, thin shriek. "For God's sake let me die, then. Why are you trying to keep me alive—where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched?—where did I hear that—it's true—true—true," the broken words rising to a wail, heart-piercing, nerve-shaking.

Adrian winced, Sir Neil clenched his hands in a strong man's shrinking from irremediable pain. Agatha Kenyon, crouched on one of the window seats, broke into helpless sobbing, while Lady Marchmont sat more stiffly erect, though amid her voluminous draperies her fragile little wisp of a figure seemed shrunken to the proportions of a child's.

Adrian turned to the doctor, his face wrung. "If nothing can be done, if there is no chance, no hope, can't you give her an easier passage—if it must be?" His voice was strained out of all likeness to its usual tones.

The great man nodded. "I sent at once



"With one grasp he tore down one of the heavy screening curtains."

—the motor should be back shortly. Poor child, I wish to heaven it were!" for Alys was speaking again in that strange, thin, unnatural voice, which seemed already divorced from earthly sounds.

"If I were dead I should be at peace, shouldn't I?" turning her eyes upon Lesley, who was supporting the restless head. "I should feel nothing—know nothing—remember nothing—so they say. Oh, do you think I'll remember?" a sudden note of panic in the tenuous thread of voice, while the leap of her eyes towards Lesley was like the clutch of a desperate hand.

"Alys," said Lesley, in a low, shaken voice, "I believe that we shall feel—that we shall know—that we shall remember. If there is anything you fear to remember, lay it down, don't carry your burden with you—surely you've borne it long enough. Oh, Alys, is there one here would deny you forgiveness if you asked it? Is God less merciful than man?"

That this poor trembling soul should go out into the darkness with doubt upon her lips and despair in her heart, that she should carry her sin and her secret with her into the silence was anguish to Lesley.

"Forgiveness will take the sting from memory, the pang from death. Oh, Alys, beg for it now—man will hear—God will hear."

Her eyes were a voiceless prayer more compelling than her entreating words.

"Where is Adrian?" breathed Alys.

He knelt on the other side of the couch.

"Alys, my poor child, there is no need to speak. I know what you would say—I have always known it. As some day my own sole need will be forgiveness, I do forgive what you did—for my sake."

His heart was in his words. Shame and dishonour and the blackness of darkness into which he had been plunged sank away and were forgotten on that dark threshold, which he would fain smooth if he could for the trembling feet so soon to pass over it.

Alys looked from the one face to the other bending over her, each wholly rapt away from self by a very passion of pity, each unconscious of the other or of aught save herself and her suffering. But her presence would not long divide them, she was going—going fast, and they would be left behind. Ay, go she must, but in her helpless hands she held all their future. Let her go silent, leaving that foul blot upon Adrian's name, and—

A sudden strange flicker, which was no fever fire, lit the great hollow eyes. He who reads the heart alone knew what lay behind that look. Love, jealousy cruel as the grave, remorse—these were the three strands of the cord which still bound her to earth. Which would yield first, or would they snap only with the silver cord itself?

At last her look settled on Adrian's face and slowly, slowly that "strange fire" sank and faded.

There was a slight stir at the door. The doctor went to it, and then, coming back to the couch, put a glass to Alys's drawn lips.

"Drink this, my poor child; it will ease you," he said gently.

Alys seemed to divine his meaning. With what strength was left to her she turned her head away.

"No, no! I can't take it—I must speak—I must speak first—there is no ease, no peace for me till I speak," her voice suddenly shrilling out again in a half-delirious note. "See, there is the brand of shame upon him; it was I who set it there." She would never lift hand again, but her look was like a finger pointing to that red scorch on Adrian's brow. "Don't let me die—I won't die—before I speak—if I do, it may take it away."

"No, no; there is no need to speak—only drink this," said the doctor soothingly, pressing the glass again to her convulsed mouth.

Sir Neil caught his arm.

"For God's sake let her speak as long as she can—you don't know how much hangs on it," he muttered hoarsely. If the doctor did not know, Neil Wedderburne did, to the depths of his honest heart.

"Are they all here—all who were in the room that day?" went on Alys. "I thought I saw them." With narrowed eyes she seemed vainly trying to pierce through gathering shadows, though the great room was bathed in a soft glow of light. "But tell them—tell them it was I—not you—I took the keys—I found the will"—the straining voice sank, faltered, stopped, then gathered force again for a last supreme effort—"I—I forged—the name. It was for you, Adrian—I thought it would give you back your own. I saw you knew—but I couldn't—I daren't confess—I tried—I did try."

The flame of life sank. Speech passed into confused and piteous moaning, though in hard-drawn gasps and with imploring eyes fixed upon her husband's face she still struggled for utterance. Now and again there came a stray articulate word.

"Forgive—mercy—God have—mercy!"

The tears had come with a sudden rush to Lesley's eyes, pain-scorched till now, and were falling thick upon the face which the heavy hand of Death was already moulding to his own likeness.

"Oh, Alys," she cried, "it was for love you did it—to her who loved much, much was forgiven."

Did she hear? There was a catch in the hard sobbing breath, a flicker of the dimming eyes still fastened on Adrian's face. He stooped nearer.

"Alys!" he breathed—and the eyes softened, and then gently closed.

Lesley softly rose from beside the couch where she had knelt so long, and in silence the others followed, leaving husband and wife alone together in the nearing shadow of that infinite and awful Presence which men call Death, but which the wiser name Peace.

* * * * *

"So you are alone again."

"Yes, Lesley and Lady Marchmont have gone back to Strode. I thought you would have come to say good-bye."

"I have said good-bye," said Sir Neil with grim significance.

They were in Mrs. Kenyon's pretty drawing-room—an airy background which always threw into full relief her brother's height and air of abundant vigour. The latter was as noticeable as ever, though the keen blue eyes might lack something of their vivid outlook.

At Morelands Agatha Kenyon had cried her kind heart out in pity and sympathy for the dead and the living, but her keenest regrets found utterance now in her faltered:

"My poor Neil—it's horribly hard on you—what—what will you do now?"

"Does it matter much?" with a shrug. Then he faced round from the window out of which he had been intently if absently gazing. "You've been a good friend and done your best for me, Agatha, but—well it won't be to-morrow, nor the next day, nor likely for many a day to come, but Time is bound to do his work by and by, and two people who are made for each other—valiantly—are bound to find that out too, and all the sooner if they get a fair field to do it in. Wedderburne can look

after itself for a bit. Lesley's trustees are discharged; her cousin is the one she should naturally turn to if she wants advice, so I think I'll have a try at Thibet and the mountain sheep. I've always been hankering to have a shot at one, and as they're uncommon shy beasts and very few of them left, by the time I've secured a good head, well"—with a courageous smile—"things will likely have settled down at Strode."

"Lesley is losing a brave gentleman, Neil!" exclaimed Agatha Kenyon, breaking into a sudden sob and throwing her arms round her tall brother, in spite of his known objections to such demonstrations.

"Oh, come, Agatha," he said awkwardly, though for once he suffered the embrace; then reality broke through reserve. "It's all that's left to me, but it's precious little for a man to do for the woman he—loves—only to take himself out of her way. I wonder how many of us would do and suffer what Adrian Skene did, and for a woman, whom, poor soul, he didn't love."

THE END.

THE SUNDIAL.

A SUNDIAL stood in a garden
old

Where roses bloomed around,
And wood doves coo'd on their
swaying nests

With a soft and drowsy sound.
And the sun shone over that garden
fair

While the sundial told the hours,
And this legend was graved on the
old gray stone.

"Time flies with the buds and
flowers."

Time flies, roses are dying,

Time flies, and they blossom
again;

But blooming or dying,

Time's ever a-flying,

To-day may be sunshine—
to-morrow the rain.

A maiden walked in that garden
old,

She read the words and sighed,
"Ah, would I had heeded the
warning there,

When my love was by my
side;

I dreamed the roses would bloom
for ever,

And the parting hour delay,
But I walk alone, and the old gray
stone

With its legend seems to say—

"Time flies, roses are dying,

Time flies, and they blossom
again;

But blooming or dying,

Time's ever a-flying,

To-day may be sunshine—
to-morrow the rain."

DAISY BEACHAM.

THE LEAGUE OF LOVING HEARTS.

*JUST a loving little band,
Pledged to help the weak and sad,
Following in their Master's steps,
Who earth's mourning ones made glad.*

*By each kindly deed or word,
By each earnest pleading prayer,
By self-sacrifice unknown,
Learning suffering's cross to share.*

*Drinking from a well divine,
Living waters day by day,
Handing on that saving draught
To some traveller by the way.*

*Heavenly sunshine overhead,
Angel guardians ever near,
Satisfied with "Living Bread,"
Perfect rest from doubt and fear.*

*Little "League of Loving Hearts,"
Never cease from work and prayer.
God through you would prove His love
To each soul for whom you care.*

GRETCHEN.



LAST July we founded the League of Loving Hearts, with the idea of helping ten philanthropic societies. Many people find it impossible to contribute to more than one or two benevolent societies. So it occurred to the Editor that if every member of the League sent One Shilling, it could be distributed between ten societies, thus enabling our readers to aid a wide variety of good work.

How to Join the League.

All that is necessary in order to join the League of Loving Hearts is to fill in the coupon which will be found among the advertisement pages at the end of this magazine. After writing your name and address, you must cut out the coupon and send it with One Shilling (either a shilling postal order or twelve stamps) to The Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage,

London, E.C. A certificate of membership will be issued at once.

Prizes Offered.

I am sure that many of our readers will be able to induce **twelve friends** to join the League, so I am offering this month **prizes** to all who gain twelve or more new members of the League. You will find a page among the advertisements at the end of the magazine, where there is space for the names and addresses of twelve members to be written. Having obtained twelve, you must send the page to the Editor at the address given above with a postal order for twelve shillings, made payable to Cassell and Company. I shall then send your friends their certificates direct, saving you all further trouble; and I shall send you a **handsome volume** as a recognition of your help.

You will be able to feel that you have been the means of gaining money for ten splendid societies. Of course, if you get more than twelve names you can find another coupon in another copy of THE QUIVER, but all names must be sent on coupons. Please write the names clearly, and put "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Miss," as the case may be.

Now please go to work at once and send me your coupons as soon as possible, so that I may have the pleasure of sending you a nice book in good time for Christmas.

SOCIETIES WHICH MEMBERS WILL HELP:

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES, Stepney Causeway, E.
RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, 32, John Street, Theobald's Road, W.C.
CHURCH ARMY, 55, Bryanston Street, W.
SALVATION ARMY (Social Work), Queen Victoria Street, E.C.
MISS SHARMAN'S ORPHAN HOMES, Austral Street, West Square, S.E.
MISS AGNES WESTON'S WORK, Royal Sailors' Rest, Portsmouth.
NORTH-EASTERN HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN, Hackney Road, Bethnal Green, E.
LONDON CITY MISSION, 3, Bridewell Place, E.C.
ORPHAN WORKING SCHOOL, 73, Cheapside, E.C.
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SOCIETY FOR PROVIDING HOMES FOR WAIFS AND STRAYS.



DELICIOUS

"U.K." TEAS

FREE SAMPLES
AND
PRICE LIST ON
APPLICATION

CARRIAGE
PAID
TO ANY
ADDRESS

UNITED KINGDOM TEA CO., Ltd.,
Empire Warehouses, London.

PARIS: 8 BOULEVARD BONNE NOUVELLE.

C. BRANDAUER & Co., Ltd.,
CIRCULAR-POINTED PENS.

SEVEN PRIZE
MEDALS.



Neither Scratch
nor Spurt.

Attention is
also drawn to the
**NEW PATENT
ANTI-BLOTTING
PENS.** Sample Box of
either series, 7d.

Works: BIRMINGHAM.

WHOLESALE WAREHOUSE: 124, NEWGATE STREET, LONDON.

KEATING'S

TINS 1/1½

LOZENGES

CURE THE WORST COUGH

A WAYSIDE CONSULTATION.



THE DIAGNOSIS.

DOCTOR: "Out of condition—all you require is

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT'

—Always keep a bottle handy."

"Their goods have the merit of excellence and cheapness."

COURT CIRCULAR.

IRISH Fish Napkins, 25, 12d. per dozen. Dinner Napkins, 35, 6d. per dozen. Table Cloths, 2 yds. square, 25, 12d.; 2½ yds. by 3 yds., 35, 12d.; Kitchen Table Cloths, 11½d. each.

Real Irish Linen Sheet, fully bleached, 2 yds. wide, 15, 12d. per yard. Roller Towelling, 2½d. per yard. Softies Linen, 8½d. per yd. Linen Dusters, 35, 3d. 14½d. 5 cloth, 45, 6d. per dozen.

DAMASK Fine Linens and Linen Diaper, 15d. per yard. Strong Huckaback Towels, 25, 6d. per dozen.

TABLE AND HOUSE LINEN.

ROBINSON & CLEAVER, Ltd., Belfast

By Appointment to the King and Princess of Wales.
And at 156 to 170, Regent Street, London.

K.B.—All Inquiries for Samples and a Letter Orders to be sent to Belfast.

HELENA.

NIXEY'S

"REFINED" BLACK LEAD.

NIXELENE

STOVE PASTE.

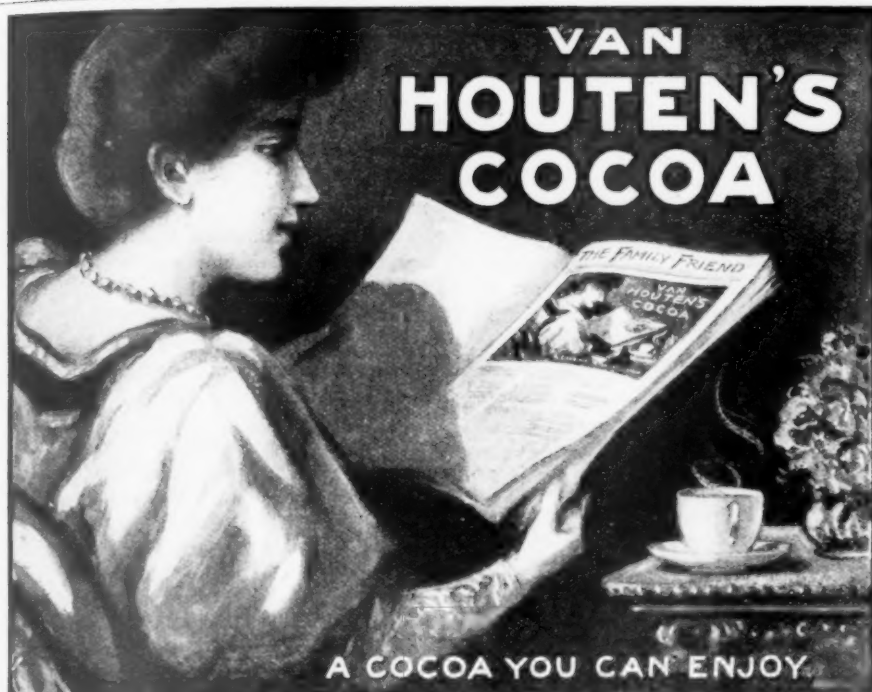
50 WRAPPERS from above sent to 12, Soho Square, London, W., will entitle you to a copy of this beautiful picture, or companion one "Julia" (each in 22 colours). *Be sure and state which picture you wish, and mention this magazine.* New presentation plate, entitled "Her Eyes," ready January, 1908. These pictures are free from any advertisement, and are sent post free to any address.

Q.—Dec., 1907.]

[Face end matter.



IN WINTER TIME.



**VAN
HOUTEN'S
COCOA**

A COCOA YOU CAN ENJOY



After FREE TRIAL you can buy "NERVILETTES" at any chemist's or store at 1/6, 2/6 or 4/6 per bottle, but if at all difficult to obtain, kindly send stamps for size required direct to J. CHAPMAN & Co., Ltd., Norwich, who will forward at once post-paid.

Coleman's "NERVILETTES" free to any applicant who simply fills in this form and sends same to J. CHAPMAN & Co., Ltd., Norwich. Trial costs nothing.

**SIGN
HERE.**

Name _____

Address _____

COLEMAN'S NERVILETTES

The Great ... Nerve Remedy.

**TO GET WELL.
TO KEEP WELL.**

Perhaps you don't fully appreciate the blessing of perfect health. You may occasionally feel a slight headache, a little pal or shiver, perhaps suffer from a sensation of dyspepsia, constipation or liver and kidney disarrangement, but you take little or no notice of it. But some day something goes wrong of a more serious nature, and you are glad to pay two or three guineas for a consultant. The specialist considerably withholds his opinion of the case, but justly informs the family that the degeneration has been going on so long that now it is very serious. A continuation of good health, energy and buoyancy depends entirely upon a continuance of nerve force. Once allow the nervous system to get "run down" or "out of gear," then the whole organic machinery is ripe for mischief of any description. The easy way to avoid any risk of nervous breakdown is to apply at once for a free trial bottle of "Nervilettes," take them as directed, and if approved, continue the treatment, and recommend all your friends to do likewise. "Nervilettes" will not only get you well, but keep you well.

I, F. H. T. Esq., of 5, Alan Road, King's Road, Norwich, writes, Sept. 14th, 1927: "I tried nearly every cure obtainable for a severe attack of nerves, but all to no purpose, until I tried your 'Nervilettes.' I am greatly pleased at the speedy cure."

"NERVILETTES" FREE TO-DAY.

Quiver, Dec. 1927.

A Charming Christmas Present

There is probably no gift that gives so much pleasure, is appreciated so keenly, or that is treasured so dearly as a gift of Books. The appearance of The People's Library, the latest, handsomest, and cheapest edition of masterpieces published, brings within reach of the most modest purse, works of the world's great writers — books that are for ever a source of enjoyment. A selection from the 25 volumes now ready would form quite an ideal Christmas or Birthday Present at a cost ranging from the trifling eightpence for the single cloth-bound volume, to 37 6 for the 25 beautiful leather-bound books.

The "Morning Leader," in a notice headed "More Marvels," says—"The second batch of The People's Library, Messrs. Cassell's astounding series of reprints, is in a way more interesting than the first."

The People's Library

"The Times" calls The People's Library "The last word in cheap reprints," and "The Daily Chronicle" says—"A Library of great books issued most handsomely, though at a small price."

Cloth, 6ilt Back, 8d. net. Leather, Gilt Back and Top, 1s. 6d. net.

25 Volumes Now Ready

- | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Treasure Island and Kidnapped | STEVENSON | 14. King Solomon's Mines | HAGGARD |
| 2. Adam Bede | ELIOT | 15. John Halifax, Gentleman | CRAIK |
| 3. East Lynne | WOOD | 16. Essays and other Works | BACON |
| 4. Essays of Elia | LAMB | 17. Mill on the Floss | ELIOT |
| 5. Ivanhoe | SCOTT | 18. Autocrat of the Breakfast Table | HOLMES |
| 6. Tale of Two Cities | DICKENS | 19. Kenilworth | SCOTT |
| 7. Poems, 1830-1865 | TENNYSON | 20. Poems (1833-1865), Selection | BROWNING |
| 8. Westward Ho! | KINGSLEY | 21. Jane Eyre | BRONTË |
| 9. Sesame and Lilies, Unto This Last, The Political Economy of Art | RUSKIN | 22. Robinson Crusoe | DEFOE |
| 10. The Scarlet Letter | HAWTHORNE | 23. Waverley | SCOTT |
| 11. Cloister and the Hearth | READE | 24. Old Curiosity Shop | DICKENS |
| 12. Christmas Books | DICKENS | 25. Essays and other Works | EMERSON |
| 13. Tom Brown's Schooldays | HUGHES | | |

75 more in active preparation.

Please write for Prospectus containing full particulars, specimen pages, etc.

CASSELL AND CO., LTD., LA BELLE SAUVAGE, LONDON, E.C.

LETTERS FROM CELEBRITIES.

The Healthy Mind in the Healthy Body.

THE keynote of happiness, long life, and successful achievement is the healthy mind in the healthy body. Sanatogen is the tonic food which is being prescribed by the medical profession to-day to bring about this happy condition. Not only have 5,000 physicians endorsed in writing the merits of Sanatogen as the ideal recuperative and restorative, but the most distinguished men and women of the day have not hesitated in coming forward to personally testify to the great benefits they have derived from Sanatogen.

Ven. Archdeacon Sinclair bestows high praise.

"THE CHAPTER HOUSE,

"ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, E.C.

"Sanatogen appears to be an admirable food for invalids and those who suffer from indigestion."

William Sinclair

Sanatogen is not a secret remedy. Its composition is known to and approved by the medical profession. It is a scientific combination of pure milk albumen, the most essential food principle known, with glycerophosphates, the substance which forms one of the most important constituents of the brain and nervous system, and, owing to its composition, it nourishes the system whilst toning the nerves and giving healthy stimulus to the brain.

Thus Mr. John Hare recommends it :

"75, UPPER BERKELEY ST., PORTMAN SQ., W.

"I have found Sanatogen a most valuable tonic and stimulant during a period when I had to work very hard under conditions of great weakness and ill-health. I can heartily recommend it to those working under similarly distressing circumstances."

John Hare

Sanatogen is life itself to the brain worker and in cases where, through illness or overwork, the vital powers show signs of flagging.

Madame Sarah Grand, the distinguished authoress, writes :

"10, GROVE HILL, TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

"Sanatogen has done everything for me which it is said to be able to do for cases of general debility and exhaustion. I began to take it after nearly four years' enforced idleness from extreme debility, and felt the benefit almost immediately. And now, after taking it steadily three times a day for twelve weeks, I find myself able to enjoy

both work and play again, and also able to do as much of both as I ever did."

Sarah Grand

Dyspepsia, weakness, nervousness, depression, disappear under a course of this tonic food remedy. Unlike other tonics, it leaves no depressing after-effects, but the beneficial results are permanent. Sanatogen is a priceless boon to those who are weak and run down, or who are called upon to make extra efforts of mind or body.

Mr. C. B. Fry, the well-known cricketer, enthusiastically endorses it :

"GLENBOURNE MANOR, WEST END, HANTS.

"Sanatogen is an excellent tonic food in training, especially valuable as a tonic during the periods of nervous exhaustion commonly called staleness, to which men who undergo severe training are liable. I have recommended it to many of my friends."

C. B. Fry

Sanatogen is eminently suitable for invalids, for, whilst it is a powerful recuperative and restorative, it can be borne by the most delicate stomach when other food is rejected. It aids digestion and strengthens the digestive organs ; it enriches the blood and restores the buoyancy, the elasticity, the vigour of health.

All who suffer from sleeplessness are recommended to take a course of Sanatogen, as by toning the system it promotes refreshing sleep.

From infancy to old age there is no period at which this tonic food remedy is not of inestimable benefit.

It can be obtained of all Chemists.

Those interested in getting well and keeping well should read an engrossing booklet by Dr. C. W. Saleeby, F.R.S.E., the well-known medical writer. It is entitled "The Will to Do," and treats of matters of vital importance to our well-being in general and on modern nerve ailments in particular. The publishers, Messrs. F. Williams & Co., 83, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C., will forward a copy entirely free of charge if mention is made of this magazine.

THE LEAGUE OF LOVING HEARTS.

As mentioned on page 160, a HANDSOME VOLUME will be sent to any reader of THE QUIVER who obtains twelve new members of the League of Loving Hearts. The names and addresses must be written clearly below, and this coupon must be sent with a postal order for Twelve Shillings—being the subscription of One Shilling for each member—to The Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C. No further trouble will be entailed on the sender, who will receive immediately a Handsome Volume.

1. (Name)
(Address)
2. (Name)
(Address)
3. (Name)
(Address)
4. (Name)
(Address)
5. (Name)
(Address)
6. (Name)
(Address)
7. (Name)
(Address)
8. (Name)
(Address)
9. (Name)
(Address)
10. (Name)
(Address)
11. (Name)
(Address)
12. (Name)
(Address)

[The ordinary coupon for single membership will be found on another advertisement page.]

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen



The Choicest of Xmas Gifts.

Many thousands of people who used to find it a puzzle to choose a Christmas Gift now simplify the matter. They give a Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen. This, the most perfect of the fountain pens, has long established its claim on the favour of the writing public. As a Gift it is particularly suitable—a pen, either plain or mounted, will please either lady or gentleman, boy or girl.

It is a Gift which is at once nice to look at and of real assistance in use. Nibs are freely exchanged if a wrong choice is made.

F.C.P.

"Eleven years ago HAROLD BEGGIE gave me the Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen with which I am writing this, and I calculate that I have written between 15 and 20 millions of words with this one nib, and it is still as good as ever."

E. KAY ROBINSON.

Prices 10s. 6d., 15s., 17s. 6d., 21s., and upwards.

In Silver and Gold for Presentation.

Of Stationers, Jewellers, &c. Booklet post free from L. & C. HARDTMUTH, 12, Golden Lane, London, E.C. (New York: 173, Broadway.)

THE Christian Life Series

Edited by

CANON BEECHING

1s. 6d. net per Volume. First Two Volumes Now Ready

Christian Marriage

By Canon Hensley Henson

The Daily Graphic says:—"This most excellent lay sermon . . . contains a noble lesson on the enduring sacredness of the most binding of mankind's social and moral obligations."

Social Life

By the Dean of Carlisle

This book sets forth the duty of a Christian in the many phases of life. Anecdotes and examples are introduced which make the work both attractive and helpful.

The Romance of the Salvation Army

By Hulda Friederichs

The Morning Leader says:—"The work is extraordinarily human. . . . Facts like those of Miss Friederichs give the reader an extraordinary picture of the life and romance of those who go into the highways and hedges." 3s. 6d.

CASELL AND CO., LTD., LONDON.

"The Quiver" Funds.

The following is a list of contributions received up to and including October 30th, 1907. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month.

For *Dr. Barnardo's Homes*: Bradford, 7s. 6d., 5s., £1 11s. 6d., 3s., 2s., 5s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 10s., 3s.; L. R. (Newcastle), 5s., 5s.; Mrs. Newnham, 10s.; E. M. Newnham, 5s.; E. N. (Croydon), 4s.; God's Tenth (Rotherham), 14s. —Total: £5 13s. Sent direct to Dr. Barnardo's Homes: A. W., 2s. 6d.; C. A. M., a small petticoat (very useful size).

For "*The Quiver*" *Waifs' Fund*: Calthorpe (Oxon), 2s. 6d.; M. A. L. (Hounslow), 5s.

For *The Children's Country Holiday Fund*: The Misses Fitness, 10s.

For *The Lord Mayor's Cripple Fund*: B. Moloney, 10s.

For *The Alexandra Hospital*: Wilfred (Porth), 1s. 6d.

For *The Missions to Seamen*: A Friend (Bournemouth), 2s.

For *Mr. Marcus Bergmann's Work of Circulating the Scriptures among the Jews*: W. P., £5.

J. P. S., an Original Member of the "League of Loving Hearts," kindly sends £1 for division between the ten societies.

RADIOGRAPHY APPARATUS FOR THE GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL.

	£	s.	d.
Amounts previously acknowledged	19	9	1
"Wilfred" (Porth)	0	1	6
W. Fraser	0	0	3
Y. Z.	0	5	0

B. Moloney	0	5	0
M. S. J.	0	1	0
J. Norman Baker	0	1	0
Irene Collyer	0	1	0
Margie Collyer	0	1	0
J. & G. Shaw	0	5	0
F. G. Kinnear	0	0	6
Miss Greenlees	0	10	0
"Western Cornwall" (Helston)	0	7	6
Weston-super-Mare	0	2	6
Stoke Newington	0	1	6
C. J. L. (Broughty Ferry)	0	3	0
T. Cunningham	0	1	0
W. P.	5	0	0
Ronald's Mama	1	0	0
"Two Friends" (Nairn)	0	10	0
Mrs. G. Barrett	0	8	8
Member of League of Loving Hearts (Stirling)	0	2	6
Margaret and Baby Boy	0	1	0
E. H. C. K.	0	2	6

Total £29 0 6

The Sale of Work in connection with the Church Army, at which a stall is furnished entirely by "The Quiver" Bazaar Competitors, will be held at the Portman Rooms, London, W., on November 25th and 26th. The sale will be opened by H.R.H. The Duchess of Connaught on the first day, and by H.H. Princess Louise Augusta on the second day.

COUPON.

The League of Loving Hearts.

To the Editor, "*The Quiver*,"

La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

Please enrol me as a Member of the League of Loving Hearts and forward a Certificate. I enclose One Shilling.

(Signed)

Address

Dr. J. Collis Browne's

Chlorodyne

The ORIGINAL and ONLY GENUINE.

The Best Remedy known for

**COUGHS, COLDS,
ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS.**

Acts like a charm in
Diarrhoea. Cholera & Dysentery.

Chlorodyne is a liquid taken in drops, graduated according to the malady. It invariably relieves pain of whatever kind; creates a calm, refreshing sleep; allays irritation of the nervous system when all other remedies fail; leaves no bad effects; and can be taken when no other medicine can be tolerated.

Convincing Medical
Testimony with
each Bottle.



Admitted by the Profession to be the Most
Valuable Remedy ever discovered.

The only Palliative in
**NEURALGIA, GOUT,
RHEUMATISM, TOOTHACHE.**

Effectually cuts short all attacks of SPASMS.

Sold in Bottles by
all Chemists,
1/1, 2/6, and 4/6.

FITS CURED

by **OZERINE**. It has cured permanently the very worst cases of Epilepsy, Fits, Failing Sickness, &c., when everything else had failed. In almost every case fits cease entirely from the first dose. It is recommended by one sufferer to another, and, by that means, is now being

SENT TO ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

Many thousands of testimonials have been received, and more are coming to hand every day.

Mrs. A. G. ADAMS, Gloucester, Oct. 12th, 1906, writes:—

"I am very pleased to tell you that my son has not had a single fit since he commenced to take **OZERINE** in September, last year. He was a great sufferer for three years. I told several friends of the wonderful curative power of this remedy, two of whom are now using it successfully, and I shall do all in my power to recommend it."

Miss MARGARET LOED, 5, Ryth St., Brunswick, Victoria, Aus. writes,
July 19th, 1906, writes:

"For seven years I suffered dreadfully from Epileptic Fits. I was recommended to try **OZERINE**, and I am thankful to say that from the first dose I took of it, now one year and ten months ago, I have never had the slightest symptoms of a fit. Please accept the gratitude of my parents and myself for the great good **OZERINE** has wrought."

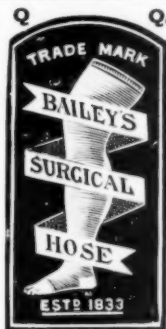
These are only two from many thousands of letters which have been received, all testifying to the extraordinary efficacy of **OZERINE**. It has cured sufferers of all ages, from 15 months to 80 years. I invite you to

TEST IT FREE OF CHARGE!

You need not spend one penny on it. On receipt of post card I will send you a bottle absolutely free, so certain am I that you will find it most successful.

Price 4s. 6d. and 11s. per Bottle, post free.

**L. W. NICHOLL, Pharmaceutical Chemist,
27, HIGH STREET, BELFAST.**



CATALOGUE FREE.

**TRUSSES, BELTS,
and
EVERY ARTICLE
for
SICK NURSING.**

"Vario," all about Elastic Stockings,
how to wear, clean, and repair them,
post free two stamps.

**W. H. BAILEY & SON,
38, Oxford St., London.
(City Branch, 52, Fore St., E.C.)**

INDIGESTION

is the primary cause of most of the ills to which we are subject. Hence a medicine that stimulates the digestive organs will relieve quite a number of complaints.

WHELPTON'S VEGETABLE PURIFYING PILLS

arouse the stomach to action, promote the flow of gastric juice, and give tone to the whole system. Headache flies away, Biliousness, Kidney Disorders, and Skin Complaints disappear, while cheerful spirits and clear complexions follow in due course. **ASK FOR**

WHELPTON'S PURIFYING PILLS.

And remember there is NO PILL "JUST as GOOD."
Of all Chemists, 1s. 1d. per Box.

Made
with the same
unfailing care for
half a century.


**Callard & Bowser's
Butter-Scotch**

You may enjoy Callard & Bowser's
Butter-Scotch with the comfortable
assurance that only first-class materials
are employed in its manufacture.

*"Really wholesome
Confectionery"* LANCET

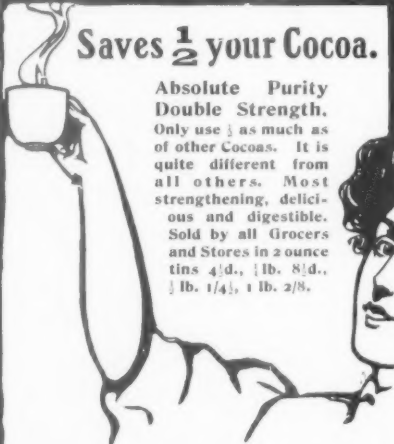
Each package bears our trade
mark—"The Thistle."

WORKS: LONDON.



Saves $\frac{1}{2}$ your Cocoa.

**Absolute Purity
Double Strength.**
Only use $\frac{1}{2}$ as much as
of other Cocos. It is
quite different from
all others. Most
strengthening, delici-
ous and digestible.
Sold by all Grocers
and Stores in 2 ounce
tins 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1 lb. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.,
1 lb. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., 1 lb. 2 $\frac{1}{8}$ d.



**BENS DORP'S
ROYAL DUTCH COCOA**

DELICIOUS COFFEE.

**RED
WHITE
& BLUE**

For Breakfast & after Dinner.

THE ÉLITE OF HAIR TONICS.

JAVOL

It is Life Blood to the Unhealthy Scalp.

MADAME MELBA writes: "I have tried Javol, and find it excellent for the hair."

1/- COUPON 5/6,
3/- & 2/-
Entitles bearer to a 2/- flask of JAVOL for
trial at 1/- on presentation to any Chemist
—failing him, send P.O. 1/- direct. B

JAVOL SHAMPOO, 3d. 5 for 1/-

JAVOL CO., 25, Budge Row, E.C.

FIRST IN THE FIELD ESTABLISHED 1830

**EVANS' ORIGINAL
MELTON PIES.**

Every Housekeeper should keep them in store in readiness for emergencies.

REALLY MADE IN MELTON MOWBRAY from the finest English Pork, in the cleanliest of surroundings and in a large airy factory. The process of manufacture from start to finish is cleanliness perfected. It speaks wonders that many customers have sold them for 50 years.

A delicacy for all times and all seasons. Ask for them "EVANS."

of all Grocers, Stores, etc.
EVANS & CO., Manufacturers, Melton Mowbray



Always Reliable.

The Most Fastidious Enjoy

**MCCALL'S
PAYSANDU
OX TONGUES.**

Delicious. Appetising.

Always Ready.